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The Week-end Review

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THE MURDER OF A NATION

THE tragedy is not yet finished. As we go to press, a new Government has replaced that of Dr. Hodza, and it is impossible to prophesy what policy it will adopt and whether Hitler will find a pretext for an armed invasion. Up till Wednesday afternoon the Czech Government and the Czech people stood resolute and calm, still clinging to the hope that France would honour her obligations in the event of invasion. The final message, sent apparently on the initiative of M. Bonnet, was that unless they surrendered immediately France would give Germany a free hand. Surrounded by the troops of Germany, Poland and Hungary (and their Hungarian frontier is unfortified), the Prague Government had no alternative but to surrender or fight alone. Dr. Benes announced his submission in a most moving message in which he declared that "We shall not attempt to throw the blame where it belongs, but leave that to the judgment of history." If the new Government decides on the latter course we may yet see Hitler invading Czechoslovakia to put down "Bolshevism" with the approval of the British and French Governments. But whether he thinks it wise to destroy Czechoslovakia immediately and entirely or permit a nominally independent remnant to remain until a more convenient time, the ultimate result must be the same. The destruction of this last refuge of democracy and freedom in Europe east of the Rhine is not to be contemplated without horror and shame. Mr. Chamberlain will be welcomed with Union Jacks at Godesberg, but he goes to Hitler as an accomplice, not as a negotiator. No plan was agreed upon at Berchtesgaden and the proposals in Mr. Chamberlain's portfolio are meaningless, even if Hitler thinks it worth while to say something to save Mr. Chamberlain's face. Now that the real guarantee of French and British support has been withdrawn a new set of guarantors, which it is supposed are to include Germany and Italy, would merely be a final mockery—"as if," as the *Manchester Guardian* diplomatic correspondent puts it, "the viper and the scorpion were to guarantee the well-being of the shorn rabbit." There is a great and growing revulsion in Britain and France; it may well overwhelm Mr. Chamberlain. We should be deceiving ourselves to hope that it could now save Czechoslovakia.

The consequences of this tragedy are far-reaching. Britain and France may have purchased a few months, possibly a few years, of uneasy peace. Germany's purpose is the absorption or domination of all South-East Europe to the Mediterranean. Some think her next spring will be to the East. Others incline to the view that Hitler will fulfil the programme laid down in *Mein Kampf* and aim at the " annihilation " of France. If Franco and Mussolini are to be helped to victory as well as Hitler, isolated France will be no more able to defend herself than isolated Czechoslovakia. We need not speculate on the future of an isolated Britain. Continual surrender to every threat of force means the end of freedom, security and of civilised values. If we continue to accept our present rulers, we are condemned to live under the domination of the great God Fear. But the people of England have not yet spoken.

Labour and the " Shameful Betrayal "

The National Council of Labour came out with a strong and clear protest against the " shameful betrayal " of the Chamberlain-Daladier plan. This pronouncement registers the same feeling that was expressed in the statement of the Trades Union Congress a fortnight ago, and it unquestionably represents the attitude of the great body of British Labour. There is a small minority of Lansburyite pacifists and others who still hope that Mr. Chamberlain is bringing them peace. Handicapped by the uncertainty of the situation and by the way in which the Government has withheld information about the exact meaning of the plan, Labour leaders could do no more at this stage than make their protest, and arrange for a campaign of public meetings in the country. Mr. Attlee as Leader of the Opposition—and he has been joined in this by the Liberal leader—has demanded, very properly and on admirably stated grounds, the immediate summoning of Parliament. The Prime Minister has refused this in a plausible reply (he must not be embarrassed in his " delicate negotiations " and so forth); but he promises that Parliament shall be recalled at the earliest possible date—which presumably means next week, after his return from his second " delicate negotiations " with Hitler at Godesberg. If the plan goes according to the hopes of the planners (a big " if " !), Mr. Chamberlain may get a vote of confidence in the House of Commons. But we have the gravest doubt whether he could get a majority in the country, to such a point has he outraged public opinion in every party and every class.

The Duce Sounds His Trumpet

There was little doubt about the reaction of Italy (that is to say of the Duce and his controlled press) to the plans for the destruction of Czechoslovakia. The Duce indeed had already claimed the credit of being among the foremost advocates of a plebiscite. It is a little odd that a man with so profound a contempt for democracy should be so ardent for this ultra-democratic device. And it is even odder when one remembers that he himself has an unhappy German minority in South Tirol which has long been deprived of the rights of " self-determination." In the course of the tour he has been making in the last few days in north-east Italy (including a half hour's visit of ceremony to Jugoslav territory), Mussolini sounded the Fascist trumpet in unison with the Nazi tom-toms, and boasts of the marvellous achievements of his regime were coupled with declarations of readiness to face another war, and with a pretty clear hint that he has a military alliance with Hitler. Nevertheless we doubt whether he really wants war, and he probably knows that the Italian people would be pushed into it with the greatest reluctance. A voluntary liquidation of Czechoslovakia and the development of a " Four-Power Pact " would be far more to his taste; and the milder tone of the Fascist press in the last day or two towards France (against whom there had hitherto been a virulent campaign) is an indication of the way the wind is blowing.

Hungary Wants Her Share

Whatever reservations the Duce may have had in mind with regard to the South Tirol, his advocacy of all-round self-determination found ready acceptance in Budapest. Admiral Horthy hurried to East Prussia for a conference with Field-marshal Göring; M. Imrédy, the Hungarian Premier, accompanied by M. de Kanya, the Foreign Minister, sped to Berchtesgaden. Received by the Führer, they pressed for German backing to Hungary's claims to recover the Magyar districts of Slovakia. According to reports current in Berlin on Wednesday, M. Imrédy undertook to place landing grounds at the disposal of the German air force if it became a question of an invasion of Czechoslovakia. In return for this curiously cynical gloss on the text of the pact of non-aggression which Hungary concluded with the Czech Government a bare month ago, Hitler appears to have endorsed M. Imrédy's territorial demands, so far as Slovakia is concerned. Whether his backing of Hungarian irredentism extends to Transylvania, whose severance from Rumania is a matter of still greater interest to the Hungarian propertied class, time will show.

Poland Turns to Germany

Conscious of its possession of the debatable Corridor, to say nothing of a German-speaking minority a million strong, the Polish Government lost little time in deciding which way the cat was jumping. Hot on M. Imrédy's heels, the Polish Ambassador in Berlin posted on Tuesday to Berchtesgaden, there to make formal demand for the recovery of Teschen and the other Polish-speaking areas just inside Czechoslovakia's Silesian frontier. According to the Polish press, démarches of a peremptory character were made simultaneously in London and Paris respecting this demand—on the assumption presumably that Britain and France, overawed by the Reich lion, would listen politely even to the jackals. In any case, Mr. Chamberlain reached Godesberg on Thursday with the knowledge that not merely the Sudeten Germans' claim to self-determination would have to be dealt with but, in addition, a whole series of demands for further frontier revision.

Through American Eyes

Mr. Chamberlain may claim that he has gained time for Britain's rearmament programme, but one part of the heavy price has already been paid: Britain has forfeited finally whatever shreds of respect her policies commanded in the United States. When the terms of last Sunday's Anglo-French agreement became known in America, the attitude of the press was, at first, one of incredulity. Subsequently, when the facts could no longer be doubted, comment ranged from amazement that the London-Paris " Axis " had jettisoned its one reliable ally in Central Europe to condemnation of what the *New York Post* called " the world's greatest betrayal." Most newspapers took the line that the abandonment of Czechoslovakia to Nazi aggression meant the end not only of the French

" system " in Europe but of all that remains of the conception of international law and order. Some journals had the honesty to admit that the United States was in a poor position to complain since it had refused any obligation to save the country the chief architect of which was President Wilson ; and here and there a note was sounded deprecating moral indignation from the safe distance of three thousand miles. The general impression, however, created by the American press is that it reflects a public opinion outraged by the spectacle of British and French Ministers carrying out Hitler's orders to assassinate a friend.

Speeches at Geneva

In the world as it is to-day the proceedings of the League at Geneva look like a sad piece of play acting. We can hear eloquent appeals and trenchant criticism from a Wellington Koo or an Alvarez del Vayo (whose bitter attack on the treachery and cynicism of the Western democracies was only too well justified) ; but nobody expects any practical results. Japan is invited to accept the obligations of membership of the League and to agree to an inquiry under Art. 15 of the Covenant into their dispute with China. That will produce contemptuous laughter in Tokio. Nor, of course, will the Japanese refusal lead to the application of sanctions under Art. 16. Sanctions are dead, and Lord de la Warr was joining last week with the delegates of several of the lesser Powers in putting more nails into the coffin. On Tuesday the question of aerial bombing of civilians was debated in the Third Committee. There is no doubt a widespread feeling against this form of savagery, and it should not be difficult to reach agreement on the principles on which a resolution may be framed and carried at Geneva. But how much respect will be paid in practice to this, or any, resolution of the League ? On Wednesday Dr. Negrin made the important announcement that the Spanish Government had decided on the immediate withdrawal of all its foreign volunteers, and asked for an international commission to supervise this.

Food Control

Sir Henry French, the Director of the Food Defence Department of the Board of Trade, outlined on Monday the measures affecting the general public which it was intended to institute immediately on the outbreak of war. The scheme, he said, was ready, and could be put into force in twenty-four hours, and local officers were standing by to set the local machinery to work with equal promptitude. Certain commodities—butcher's meat, bacon, butter and margarine, cooking fats, and sugar—would become immediately subject to rationing ; and others might have to be added later. As far as possible, use would be made of the existing wholesale and retail channels, and purchasers at the various stages of supply would continue to receive their goods from the normal suppliers. Sir Henry drew attention to the effects of improved transport in reducing the stocks held by retailers, as requiring different measures from those adopted during the late war, on account of the smaller reserves now held locally. He gave no hint of the size of the reserves now held by the Government, or by private traders on Government account ; but his speech suggested that it is the present intention that these stocks shall be distributed through the ordinary trade channels, unless the possible disorganisation of transport in exposed areas causes the Government to resort to methods of direct supply.

The Migration of Labour

The Ministry of Labour has just issued, in the current *Labour Gazette*, the results of an analysis of the character and extent of labour migration from one area to another within Great Britain. This analysis loses some of its value because there are no comparative figures to show the extent of labour migration in previous periods ; so that there is no " norm " with which the recent abnormal movements can be compared. The figures do, however, serve to show very clearly the direction of the movement, as well as its absolute dimensions. For example, of all the adult males who had their first insured jobs in Wales 16 per cent. had moved into other areas by 1937 ; and over 40,000 of these Welshmen had moved to London or the South-East. From the Northern division 13 per cent. of the men had moved elsewhere, and nearly 42,000, or over 50 per cent., had migrated to London or the South-East. Of men working in London and the South-East over 10 per cent. had started their industrial careers in other regions. Migration was on a smaller scale among women than among men, except from Wales. It was also smaller among juveniles, but in their case there has not been time for the tendency to migrate to exert its full force. The study throws no light on the extent of migration back into the depressed areas by migrants who have failed to settle down elsewhere.

Saving the Countryside

The Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee, which was appointed in 1934, has just issued its report. This is on the whole a disappointing document, because the Committee has deliberately refrained from dealing with major issues of policy, such as the question of private ownership of land or the reorganisation of local government areas, and has confined itself to suggestions for the detailed improvement of the existing law and its administration. Within these limits a number of useful proposals are made. The Committee suggests a single nationally administered code for the control of advertising, under the Ministry of Health. It wants at any rate certain sections of the seacoast completely preserved from building, under a national scheme involving a direct financial provision by the State —perhaps supplemented by grants from the urban areas on account of their interest in the preservation of seaside amenities. It recognises the practical failure of the Ribbon Development Act, and urges the Ministry to more active intervention, without making any very constructive proposals for improvement. In relation to the general powers to restrict development, it rightly proposes the repeal of the destructive clause which compels local authorities to allow building to go on unless they are satisfied that other suitable land is available on reasonable terms. This, the Committee point out, prevents a local authority from banning forms of development which it considers entirely unsuitable to its area.

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THE SURRENDER TO HITLER

The nation quickly awakened from its illusion of relief to discover that Mr. Chamberlain brought back from Berchtesgaden a peace that is without honour or security. He has shown his readiness to pay Danegeld in Czech currency in exchange for an unspecified period of Nazi tolerance; and for the betrayal of Czechoslovakia France is no less responsible than Britain. But already it is clear that neither nation, though the people passionately long for peace, will easily swallow so abject a surrender. They know that fear of war is no sufficient explanation for the terrible part played by their Government, and they ask whether anything can justify us in doing Hitler's work for him, and whether in fact even their own peace has been secured at the ghastly price of sacrificing the Czechs to Nazi Germany.

Last week we indicated that a "sell-out" was likely, but its completeness must have staggered even the staunchest supporter of "appeasement." Without consulting Dr. Benes, without bothering to communicate with the Russian Government, the British and French Cabinets decided to accede to the demands of Berlin. Hitler may have asked for a plebiscite, but in substance every clause of the ultimatum presented to Mr. Chamberlain at Berchtesgaden has been meekly accepted. The essence of the betrayal was the withdrawal, actual, and at last formal, of the French and indirectly of the British guarantee against aggression. It was only on condition that that guarantee was real that the Czechs could be expected to agree to discuss concessions or compromises. Deserted by France, her ally, and England, the mediator, Czechoslovakia has agreed to commit suicide to save her nominal friends from war. Less than twenty years after they proclaimed the Covenant of the new world order, the Versailles Powers have torn it up and, submitting to the threat of force, established once more the old principle that "to him that hath shall be given; and from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath."

For seven weary years the League has been slowly strangled by Franco-British policy. This last kick in the stomach finally disposes of the one good thing that emerged from four years of blood and agony. Suspect to British and exploited by French diplomacy, its ideals had only found favour among the statesmen of the small nations and the peoples of the world. But the national politicians merely tolerated it so long as it did not interfere with their imperial huckstering. In the case of Manchuria, armed invasion was made to square with the Covenant by the legal skill of Sir John Simon; in that of Abyssinia, we resorted to a pretence of action that was more fatal than inaction.

By the time that Mussolini intervened in Spain, the Covenant had become so awkward to manage that it was virtually dispensed with. The statesmen who had pledged themselves to unite against aggression now "saved the peace" by exporting their armaments everywhere except to the innocent victim. Pathetically clinging to the illusion that Mussolini could be retained as a friend and ally, they tied their own hands and watched the Fascists butchering not only Spaniards, but British seamen. Even Sir John Simon could not argue that this conduct was strictly in accord with the spirit or the letter of the Covenant. But although international law could no longer be manipulated to permit of aggression, it was easy to invent the new principle of "non-intervention" to encompass the defeat of a small nation by its designing neighbour.

Alas! Non-intervention was a disappointment to our statesmen. Deprived of arms and starved of food, the Spanish people refused to "save the peace" and accept defeat for the sake of an Anglo-Italian agreement. Aggression against Czechoslovakia offered the same disadvantage on a more formidable scale. Here was a country not torn by civil war, but united; not short of arms, but equipped with a powerful army and guaranteed by pledges of assistance from France and Russia. Here in brief would have been the rallying point for collective security, if that conception had ever been understood by statesmen.

Undismayed by its failure to "settle" the Spanish question, the National Government tried the policy of mediation. Himself in agreement with Hitler in desiring neutralisation of Czechoslovakia, which stood in the way of the Four Power Pact, Mr. Chamberlain adopted a policy that encouraged Hitler and undermined French resolution. But the Czech mobilisation on May 21st forced Britain and France into intervention of a double kind. On the one side Hitler was warned of the danger of a direct attack; on the other he was encouraged to believe he could gain his ends by peaceful blackmail. Incessant pressure was put on Prague while friendly gestures were made to Berlin. Within a few weeks Lord Runciman had extorted dangerous sacrifices from the Czechs, while the Germans had not budged one inch. Germany seemed to enjoy this style of negotiation, and President Benes's Fourth Plan was accepted in Paris and London as a generous contribution to peace and a final basis for further concessions. Then Hitler gave his orders in Nuremberg.

The Nuremberg speech made it clear that in Hitler's opinion mediation was too slow a process. Like non-intervention in Spain, it had failed to produce a complete victory for Fascism over a small democracy. But the Nuremberg speech was too outspoken even for the French Cabinet, and last week, in spite of the machinations of the National Government, the idea of collective security was showing signs of enforced revival. Not at Geneva but among the peoples of Europe, the spirit of democracy was stirring, and the man in the streets of Paris and London and Prague and even New York was muttering "we have got to stop the bully somewhere!" At long last the Fascist would have to decide whether or not to attack an opponent stronger than himself.

There was a danger of war and Mr. Chamberlain acted swiftly. He adopted a new principle of personal intervention which meant in fact, not, as the deluded public hoped, warning Hitler against aggression, but listening to and accepting Hitler's terms. In the romantic phraseology of the *Times*, Mr. Chamberlain and the Führer met as "compeers," or, to put it more bluntly, the British Government became the agent of National-Socialism in its conquest of Central Europe.

The "realists" who preferred British armaments to foreign friends, and power politics to League action, have had their way. Accusing the supporters of the League of war-mongering, and refusing at all costs to collaborate with Russia they have brought things to a pass in which every aggressive State has only to threaten war to know that he can have his way. They have surrendered Europe to the Fascist terror.

It is as well to count the cost of this policy while we are still free agents. If the Franco-British plan is put into force, the Berlin-Rome axis will become the only axis of European politics. Around it France and Britain will move not by their own power but under the controlling influence of Berlin.

Week after week we have urged that the cause of Spain was the cause not only of democracy but of British and French security. The second world war began with the invasion of Spain in July, 1936.

Surrounded, as it now is, on three sides by Fascist States France becomes a second-class Power which must mind its Fascist " p's and q's." Germany has encircled the Power that at Versailles encircled Germany. Fine words were spoken against the German Social Democrats who funked civil war and sought positions in the Third Reich. The situation of the French and British nations will not be less unhappy in the new Unholy Roman Empire.

Mr. Chamberlain is a man of peace. When Hitler thumps his mailed fist, he agrees to give the Sudeten Germans " the right of self-determination." He should not think, however, that the matter will stop there. Hitler and Mussolini are more audacious thinkers than the politicians of the demo-plutocracies and have longer memories. In Egypt and Palestine there are peoples who can be similarly persuaded to prefer German liberty to British imperialism. In the Empire there are millions who cry for self-determination and those cries can easily be manipulated to suit Fascist policy. Will Mr. Chamberlain's aeroplane be ready for yet another mission of peace? If it is not, then the peace which he brings us will be of short duration. The wealthy landlord has never got off with one payment to the blackmailer. But next time the money may be paid not in Czech but in British currency.

In the case of France, the surrender seems final. But there are still people in this country who imagine that Britain will fare differently in the new world; that by piling up armaments, we can still save our independence, and that Hitler will turn his attention to the Ukraine. This is Mr. Chamberlain's gamble. Russia will withdraw into her shell, and, if she is wise, may come to terms with Germany. Given the choice of attacking Stalin who is prepared to fight, and of moving against the capitalist Powers of the west, which will seem to Hitler the more attractive proposition?

The nation is dimly aware of the consequences of the Chamberlain mission. Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden and Sir Archibald Sinclair have all underlined the warnings of the National Council of Labour; and it is already clear that the decent Conservative is shocked and disgusted by the shifty autocracy of a clique whose leadership he will refuse to recognise as soon as he can see any alternative to it. Though it is too late to save the integrity of Czechoslovakia, it is not too late to save this country from its present leaders. If in the next fortnight Mr. Chamberlain can be overthrown much can be salvaged from the present wreckage. We may still, by demanding and obtaining a government which we can respect, prove to Hitler that democracy still exists in this country. This accomplished, we shall at least have won a rallying ground for our scattered forces. There is a world of difference between retreat and the resigned acceptance of defeat.

COLD FEET IN PARIS

NOT for peace, but *to be left in peace* for six months, or a year, or perhaps a little longer (it depends on Hitler) the French have sold out their Czech allies, after promising a hundred times to support them, and have abandoned their place as a first-class Power in Europe. I almost feel like apologising to M. Flandin for having said in the past that his defeatism did not cut much ice in France. In the last week the press has been preaching a Flandin programme, and the Government has carried it out in practice. " To hell with the Czechs! Let us retrench ourselves behind the Maginot Line, and hope for the best—so long as the Line lasts." For that is the substance of Flandin's policy. He also said something about becoming an Empire Power, " after the manner of the British Empire," instead of being a " European Power," the bold assumption being that Hitler and Mussolini will be glad to leave France and her Empire in peace. It is not easy to see Mussolini doing it—for what has Italy got out of Hitler's triumphant progress in Central Europe?

A fortnight ago, ten days ago, everything could still have been saved. The French could have made a show of strength, mobilised several classes, got the Russians to make a similar demonstration; and Hitler would not have dared to go very far. Menacing though his speech of September 12th was, it was absolutely clear that he was not ready to " take on " France and Britain, still less the two of them and Russia. He flattered and cajoled the French, and offered them Strasbourg Cathedral as a present.

Let no Frenchman tell me it was the fault of the British. I shall laugh in his face if he does. Never since the war was France so fully supported by Britain as she was this time. The night before Hitler's speech an " interpretation of British policy " was issued in Downing Street; it left no doubt whatsoever that if France threatened to intervene in defence of Czechoslovakia she could do so with the whole weight of Britain behind her. On Monday, September 12th, a few hours before Hitler's speech, there was a French Cabinet meeting. Everybody looked very grim and determined. " We have taken measures to meet every—*yes, every*—eventuality." And when I asked one of the members of the Government what he thought of the British statement the night before, he said: " *Je suis très, très, TRÈS, TRÈS satisfait.*" Just like that, with a wonderful *crescendo.* So on that Monday, nobody dreamed of complaining of a lack of British support.

And then, on Tuesday, after Hitler's speech, the terrifying *dégonflage* started. The Cabinet met again, and the question arose whether France should mobilise several classes. Mandel and Paul Reynaud said yes; but Bonnet would not hear of it, nor would the greater part of the Cabinet. Chautemps and De Monzie were particularly firm in opposing mobilisation. Daladier, though rather in favour of a firm policy, especially after his discussion the night before with General Gamelin and General Georges, could arrive at no decision for a long time. In the end, seeing his Cabinet so divided, he had the brainwave of *asking Mr. Chamberlain to decide for them.* Britain not being an ally of Czechoslovakia, the step meant a complete French surrender. Hitler, fully informed by his emissaries in Paris of the dispositions of the French Government, now knew exactly how to deal with Mr. Chamberlain; what Mr. Chamberlain got was not a " candid discussion," but an ultimatum. I have little doubt that the Berchtesgaden meeting would have been very different if, during that time, France had been making a show of strength.

There had been much wire-pulling just before that fateful Cabinet meeting on Tuesday. Most active behind the scenes were Flandin and Caillaux and Mistler, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate; they all claimed to be speaking on behalf of rural France, which they represent in Parliament, and which, they said, " was not prepared to fight for the Czechs." As if it was a question of " fighting for the Czechs!" Of course, nobody goes to war with an easy heart; and in rural cafés you will hear plenty of people saying: "*On se fout des Tchèques*"; but is that decisive? Was there a single French reservist who in the last month refused to join his regiment? An American friend who has just returned from a visit to the Maginot Line described the French soldiers as "very tough babies."

The decisive part in the *dégonflage* was played not by the habitué of the Café du Commerce, but by the Flandins and Caillauxs and the Chautemps—by the *haut personnel de la République*, and by their pals in the Paris press. What a stampede of cold feet that was during the whole of last week! Benes was the villain, Benes was a crook; the Czechs were impossible people, the Czechs were the agents of Bolshevism; Czechoslovakia was a ridiculous miscarriage of Woodrow Wilson's brain; are you going to be killed because three million Germans want to be German? The big Franco-Czech issue was being deliberately confused by the Sudeten issue. Nobody—except two or three papers—breathed a word about France's treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia (unless it was to show that these were no longer valid); still less about the complete collapse of France's system of alliances, and the breaking of all her links with Eastern Europe if Czechoslovakia were abandoned. Pertinax and Henri de Kerillis were almost alone in the whole French press to protest violently against such an acceptance of German hegemony in Europe. These two—and the Communists. For centuries, Kerillis said, it had been France's historical mission to prevent German hegemony; was France now to become a second-class, a third-class Power, to be faced, before long, with a war "in infinitely worse conditions?" For the war now would have been fought in conditions so unfavourable to Germany that she would not have risked it; and peace could have been saved without surrender if France had been firm. But she was not. For quite a long time public opinion was being deliberately undermined by defeatist propaganda—by Barthélemy in the *Temps*, by the *Jour*, the *Journal*, the *Matin*, by the *Action Française* (speak of *nationalisme intégral!*) by the *Candides* and *Gringoires*, by all the Fascist, pro-Fascist and *bien pensant* press. And now they all came out in full blast—all these papers which had supported Mussolini through thick and thin against the League, and had prayed for a Franco victory. And, to be quite truthful, the Left—with the exception of the Communists—also wobbled, as they always do in the face of a big press campaign of the Right. The Radicals, claiming to represent the views of their rural constituents, wobbled; the *Peuple*, the C.G.T. paper, said that it was no use yielding completely to the Dictators, but that war was no solution either; and Blum, who now says that he read about the Anglo-French plan "with mixed feelings of cowardly relief and shame," had, three days before, welcomed Mr. Chamberlain's trip as an act of "noble audacity in his will for peace." But did M. Blum not realise that this "noble audacity" was a direct outcome of the French Government's lack of audacity? Another curious bit of propaganda done by the press of the Right was to fill columns with gruesome details of what happened in Barcelona during the high-explosive bombing (one had a suspicion at the time that these horrors were being perpetrated as a warning to the French, and in order to lend the French Fascist press a hand!), and also with suggestions that the French Air Force was no good at all, and the A.R.P. of Paris non-existent. But perhaps those in charge of the Government in the last eighteen months might have thought of this sooner! Especially about the A.R.P.

As I write, it is still unknown how the Anglo-French plan will work in practice. Will the Czechs accept it? Will Hitler ask for even more—now that he thinks he has nothing more to fear from France and Britain? And what if the Czechs, driven to despair, decide to fight? There may be a revulsion in French opinion; for, whatever the papers may say, the man-in-the-street is not happy about the surrender of Czechoslovakia. Can the French invade the Rhineland? Perhaps not; but if Germany is blockaded, and if Russia comes in, she will be at an enormous disadvantage.

Assuming that the London plan is accepted by everybody, what will be the effect in France? The Government will say that France must now concentrate on the air force and A.R.P., and see that all is spick and span for "next time." Perhaps something will be done, but perhaps not. Only the internal effects of the surrender of Czechoslovakia may be profound. The working class—or most of it—is revolted and disgusted. It may be a death-blow to the Front Populaire—not as an economic coalition (for that is dead long ago), but as an anti-Fascist force. Will the Communists and the working class as a whole have any more reason for "defending democracy," and for worrying about keeping France, hitherto the nucleus of a potential anti-Fascist coalition, in good fighting shape? "The three revolutions of the nineteenth century, including the Commune," says Kerillis, "sprung up as rebellions of the people's national pride." Will not the Left-wing nationalism of the working class rebel against those who have surrendered Czechoslovakia to Hitler? And looking deep down into the possible motives of the defeatists and the Franco-worshippers, one may wonder whether that was not their game from the start—to create, as a reaction against their own defeatism, a violent revolutionary movement of "disloyalty to the Régime" on the part of the working class, and so have at last a good excuse for producing from somewhere a valiant General Cavaignac, or a brave General Galiffet, who will have come to "save France from Bolshevism." Kerillis is well aware of this possibility when he says to his colleagues on the Right to-day: "You have worked well for a French Bolshevism."

I may be over-dramatising the possible effects in France of the surrender of Czechoslovakia; but I am not prepared to bet that even if everything is peaceful and lovely in Europe for a time, while Hitler is digesting Czechoslovakia, everything will be peaceful and lovely in Paris, too.

Paris, Tuesday. ALEXANDER WERTH

WAR ECONOMICS

THE saying, *inter arma silent leges*, has a special pertinence to economic affairs. Under the normal conditions of capitalism, production is guided by the profit motive, except over the still narrow field occupied by various forms of public enterprise. Under war conditions, the expectation of profit by no means disappears; indeed, wars have usually yielded a rich harvest to the profit-makers. The essential difference is that, when war dominates the scene, the expectation of profit ceases to determine the course of production. The State, in effect, decides what is to be produced, and then proceeds to pay for it on terms which keep the capitalists in a good temper. Prices no longer govern output; they become the rewards given to the individual capitalists for patriotic obedience to the demands of the capitalist State.

This is true pre-eminently of countries actually at war. But it is also largely true of countries which are engaging intensively in preparation for war. To-day Japan, at war with the Chinese people, orders the entire economy under the central direction of the military authorities. To the Capital Flight Prevention Law of 1932 was added in 1937 the Foreign Trade Control Law and the Capital Control Law, which gave the State full authority over both foreign trade and exchange and the investment of capital at home. To those have now been added a more general measure empowering the State to exercise direct control over all industries and the entire man-power of the country. To-day what is produced in Japan and what is brought in from outside are settled, not by the profit-expectations of the Japanese capitalists, but by the *fiat* of the militarised State. The capitalists receive their profits, but these profits can no longer be regarded as their reward for interpreting correctly the demands of the market. They are rather the share of the economic swag assigned to each capitalist by the all-determining State.

In Germany, not yet at war, intensive war preparation has led to a suspension of the profit-determinant hardly less complete than in Japan. Foreign exchange, foreign trade and the internal capital market are all completely controlled; and the control extends to the use to be made of company profits as well as to the new issue market, which is almost exclusively reserved for Government loans. The price structure is under a comprehensive control which has kept the price level nearly stable in face of the need for allowing considerable variations in the prices of particular commodities. Wages are completely state-determined, and taxation in its various forms now amounts to about one-third of the total national income. As this is exclusive of State borrowing, public expenditure represents a much larger portion even than this.

Italy reproduces in a less extreme form the same tendencies as Japan and Germany. The Soviet Union is, of course, for quite different reasons a completely controlled economy; but there too war preparation has had a notable effect. Budget expenditure on national defence rose, in roubles, nearly twenty-fold between 1929 and 1938. It is impossible to quote corresponding figures for the totalitarian States; for Germany no longer has a budget, and in the others the extent and forms of Government borrowing make useless any deductions from the budget figures.

Under these conditions of intensive rearmament and State direction of the course of output and foreign trade it is quite extraordinarily difficult to predict the course of economic events, even if the actual outbreak of world-wide war does not still further abrogate the normal laws of capitalist economy. It is certain that, in the countries which still, in the main, allow the course of production and employment to be settled by the expectation of profit, certain means of checking or diminishing fluctuations in economic activity are much better understood than ever before, and that the suspension of the gold standard and the changed technique of banking make it easier to maintain activity inside a particular country in face of reversion elsewhere. On the other hand, the much higher degree of insulation achieved by the countries which are more completely on a war footing tends to concentrate the effects of fluctuation on those countries which still give the profit-motive a greater determining influence. Recession in the United States communicates itself to Great Britain very much more readily and to a very much greater extent than to Germany, or even Japan—despite Japan's past reliance on the American market. And it reacts also on those countries which, being mainly exporters of raw produce for which America is a vitally important customer, can do but little to insulate their economies from the influence of world-prices of crude raw materials and foodstuffs in the remaining open markets for these goods.

The economists in this country and in the United States are at present watching with intense theoretical interest the course of the new "trade cycle" which they regard as having begun with the American recession of last year. How far, they are asking themselves, is it likely to reproduce the characteristic features of the cycle which began with the Wall Street crash of 1929? Looking at their own countries, and at the relations between them, they can see many things in common between 1929 and 1937 (but also certain important differences). But when they turn their eyes on the rest of the world, the differences greatly outweigh the resemblances in every country that is subject to State control in any comprehensive form. The Soviet Union, they have to allow, went on forging ahead during the last depression; and there is no reason why it should be affected now, even as much as it was then, by recession or even crisis elsewhere. The immense diversion of resources to armament-making holds down the standard of living in the U.S.S.R., as it is bound to do under any economic system. But it matters relatively little to the Russians how the rest of the world is faring in an economic sense—save indirectly, to the extent to which prosperity and adversity react on the political situation.

In Germany too the degree of insulation is high, though by no means so high as in the Soviet Union. Germany's power to purchase imports is of course affected by her power to sell her exports at favourable prices. But with complete power to ration imports and to subsidise exports to any requisite extent the unfavourable reactions of world depression can be canalised, though not prevented; and in one respect Germany's position may even be strengthened, because the decline in trade with other countries may enable the German authorities to negotiate barter arrangements on more favourable terms. Certainly there is no reason to suppose that even an economic crisis severe enough to lay prostrate the United States and Great Britain would do more than dent the surface of the totalitarian economy. And it is important to understand that the basic cause of this relative immunity is that Fascists, no more than Communists, allow the course of economic activity to be determined by the capitalist expectation of profit.

When Socialists say, as some of them do, that the profit system is still in full sway in the Fascist countries, they are muddling up two things. The profit system remains, in the sense that the continued exploitation of the workers for the benefit of the capitalists is a basic condition of the Fascist economy. But the system has been so altered that the profit-expectation of individual capitalist concerns in a free market no longer governs the course of output or employment. Profit-making is generalised under the auspices of the State; and the State assigns profits to the individual capitalists without allowing them to affect the general functioning of the economic apparatus.

Under these conditions, countries which allow their economics to remain subject to the trade cycle are at a serious disadvantage from the standpoint of war preparation, to say nothing of other disadvantages to which Hitler pointedly referred in his opening speech at Nuremberg. Their power to finance rearmament depends on a fluctuating power to tax, complemented by a fluctuating power to borrow. But to borrow heavily when the power to tax is low, though it serves directly to maintain employment and production, is apt to shake capitalist confidence in long-run profit expectations, and thereby to lower the level of private investment to an extent which armament activity cannot affect. Depression makes such countries less able and ready to stand up to Fascist aggression, and tends to make their capitalist rulers favour peace at any price. Whereas the rulers of the Fascist States see in rearmament on an ever-increasing scale the easiest means of maintaining economic activity, and therewith profits, and realise that any slackening in the armaments race would confront them with the very different problem of keeping production at a high level without involving themselves in a breach with their capitalist backers.

The so-called democratic countries—i.e. those which still allow production to be ruled by the expectation of private profits—will be forced under these circumstances, however reluctantly, further and further along the road towards State control. For this alone will enable them to lessen the impact on their own economies of trade fluctuations from which their totalitarian rivals are immune. So far from the "democracies" moving, under present conditions, slowly back towards "freer trade," they will tend more and more to become assimilated to the Fascist States.

A LONDON DIARY

HISTORY will for ever debate whether Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Berchtesgaden saved peace for the moment, or whether on the contrary he saved the Nazi regime. On Tuesday and Wednesday the Czechs stood firm and had the situation in the Sudeten areas under control; the French guarantee with the British promise of support seemed too absolute for any withdrawal; at the same time accounts from people returning from Germany, corroborated, as I know, by official reports, showed that the population were terrified at the thought of war with Britain, that the Reichswehr (General Beck resigned) were bitterly opposed to a general war, while German fortifications on the Rhine, as Hitler's speech showed, were not complete, and that there was a genuine opposition to war from industrialists and in some cases from workers. In these circumstances one cannot know whether Hitler would have attacked, but my reading of him is that he would not have risked a world war. One cannot even be sure that his regime would have stood a stubborn war in Czechoslovakia with French and Russian aid and an immense campaign appealing to the German people against him. (The chance of doing much by propaganda now is gone; with Hitler on top of the world and another victory by blackmail, all the critical and hostile elements in Germany were silenced.) If that was the situation Mr. Chamberlain's intervention saved not peace, but the Nazi regime, and his action was literally the greatest disaster in modern history. It may have made the difference between a Fascist world and a world moving slowly towards freedom and good government. The fight for freedom in the world is now left to isolated groups, to the heroic defenders of Republican Spain, to the Chinese and it may be to the people of Czechoslovakia. The revulsion in England now is such that Mr. Chamberlain may soon go, and there will be many things we can still do. There is now a real danger of war hysteria arising from outraged pride. Democrats have to pull themselves together and face a new and grim situation.

* * *

Rumour takes many forms about the Berchtesgaden interview. Mr. Chamberlain, according to one story, boasts of having three times thumped the table with his fist—if so, I suppose he was explaining to Hitler that he must leave the betrayal of Czechoslovakia to Britain and not march his troops across the frontier. But I believe the interview mainly took the usual form—a tirade and an ultimatum by Hitler so delivered that Mr. Chamberlain was convinced that the Führer was quite beyond any argument. Mr. Chamberlain has never had the ghost of an idea of what dictators are like; his pathetic delusion that Mussolini was his friend must by now be dispelled, and if he thought he could arrange a "settlement," called a Four Power Pact or what not, with Hitler he must, one would think, have lost that delusion too. He is not used to dealing with fanatics; they do not reside in Edgbaston nor do they take part in negotiations about local government. The first proof of his humiliation was his immediate return to London. A more experienced negotiator would have refused even if only for the sake of face-saving, to accept an ultimatum when it was first delivered, slept on the situation and tried half a dozen ways of approach before returning with nothing in his hand except a present of an oil painting.

* * *

One of the results of surrender to Hitler is that we imitate Fascist methods here. The complete secrecy in which all the discussions have taken place; the refusal to call Parliament until a *fait accompli* has been established and, above all, the manipulation of the press are new and terrifying features of British diplomacy. The public does not realise the important part played at such times by the institution of press conferences at the Foreign Office. Until Mr. Eden's departure reliable press correspondents could learn a good deal from officials and put questions to the Minister who presided at press conferences. Recently the press conferences—there have been important meetings during the crisis both with Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax—have become purely formal affairs. The Minister makes a statement, on the understanding that his name is not to be mentioned, and the same dope is put out to the world under various disguises. Foreign correspondents, waiting outside for news, know perfectly well who make the statements and report home, quite correctly, that the British Prime Minister is selling the pass but does not want it known that he is doing so. Our system of press control now resembles that of Fascist countries more than we like to admit. I hope the few really independent proprietors and the responsible diplomatic correspondents will unite to stop this rot which undermines the remains of press liberty.

How rapidly we are moving towards Fascist ideas of government can best be seen in a leading article of the *Times* of September 21st. Commenting on Mr. Attlee's request that Parliament should be called, the *Times* says:

> In times like those through which we have recently been passing the position of the ordinary M.P. towards the Government is much the same as the position of an elector towards an M.P. They have to wait until matters reach the stage when they will have the opportunity, which is never withheld or unduly delayed in this country, of voting for or against a record and a final balance-sheet submitted to them. . . . Nor have the rights of the Opposition been in any way prejudiced by the fact that Parliament was not sitting. Their leaders have been kept informed of events by the Prime Minister himself. . . .

* * *

On Wednesday the remnant of the old Socialist International met to discuss the situation. They took a firm line, but their weakness to-day is partly due to the stubborn refusal of the western Labour movements to co-operate with the Russian Trade Unions just as Mr. Chamberlain's débâcle partly results from his hatred of the U.S.S.R. The only chance of effective resistance has been conducted behind the scenes. The Churchillian and Collective Security group of Conservatives and Liberals are still putting up a fight. There have been demonstrations in Whitehall, a huge protest meeting in Trafalgar Square, and others in many halls up and down the country. Nothing can be effective behind this veil of official secrecy. Leaflets were rushed out to remind Mr. Chamberlain as he stepped into his aeroplane "to stand by the Czechs," and a forceful leaflet on the Hitler Menace is being distributed voluntarily through letter-boxes, in factories and workshops, offices and elsewhere. It is proposed that five millions of these should be distributed by Monday. Anyone willing to help in the distribution can get the leaflets from the Left Book Club, 14 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2, at the price of 5*s.* per thousand.

* * *

Hitler of course has a small group of friends in this country, as well as in France. They had a meeting at the Caxton Hall on September 16th. They roared like the Nazis at Nuremberg. It was a meeting of the new "British Council against European Commitments," the moving spirit of which is Viscount Lymington. The audience yelled its disapproval of Czechoslovakia, of Soviet Russia, of the Jews—even the name of Disraeli was the signal for a storm of booing, rather to the speaker's embarrassment, for he was quoting Isaac D'Israeli with approval—of the Communists, of "howling deans from the wilds of Kent," and of the whole of the British press. The scorn for the press—there seemed to be no exemptions—was so vocal that the three reporters unconsciously bowed their heads. Lord Lymington, who has lately been in Italy, suggested that for candour the Italian press was infinitely to be preferred to the British. Resounding cheers for Germany, Italy, "the war for God in Spain," and cheers, less resounding, for Chamberlain. The amount of conscientious objection was surprising. The chairman, Mr. Michael Beaumont, M.P. for Aylesbury and a Territorial Army officer, declared that he was not ready to fight for France when "she wantonly involves herself in a dispute in which I contend she and we have no concern." Viscount Lymington referred, quite in the Göring manner, to "sub-men who shout so loud and organise so many ballots." There were the usual sneers at the support of Basque children "by mysterious contributions from God knows where" while British children were destitute and starving. Lord Lymington was outshone by Mr. William Joyce, late henchman of Sir Oswald Mosley, who announced himself a National Socialist, and whose oratory got so furious as to render him positively incoherent. The issue in his opinion was "Chamberlain or a victory for Soviet Russia." The greater part of the audience were young people of the Fascist type. One clerical collar on the platform gave the desirable Christian touch to the proceedings.

* * *

During the last few desperate weeks—I suppose with

Germany and Italy given a completely free hand in Europe most weeks will now be desperate—the agency reports from the Continent have been wildly inaccurate. Partly, I take it, the demand for news has been so great that it has been supplied even when based on nothing but rumour, partly that the Nazis have perfected the technique of deception. I do not refer to the wicked and deliberate lying in Dr. Goebbels' press about the treatment of the Sudeten Germans and all the rest of it; nor to the Fascist bribery of a large section of the French press which began both in Paris and in the provinces to say that Czechoslovakia was not worth fighting for and so on. I am thinking of the story that did so much harm to the Czechs at the most critical time when battles were reported on the Sudeten frontier which never took place at all. Again on Tuesday morning of this week the news was published that the Czechs had accepted the Hitler-Chamberlain ultimatum, when in fact they had done nothing of the kind. They were still discussing their answer for many hours afterwards. The most comic incident was the announcement in the evening papers that Earl Baldwin had boarded Mr. Chamberlain's aeroplane at Cologne! When it arrived at Croydon the news had to be hastily suppressed, for Earl Baldwin was not there. I understand that the confusion arose from an agency telegram reporting Lord Baldwin's presence in the neigbourhood not of Chamberlain, but of Chambéry. Two other journalistic feats should be mentioned. On Thursday Lord Beaverbrook's evening paper came out at nine in the morning with a poster "Peace" and a leading article saying that Mr. Chamberlain's flight had made everything splendid for a peaceful world. This edition of the paper found few buyers; one newsvendor explained that people came along, looked at the poster and said "bunkum" or a less polite equivalent and went their way. A few hours later the paper had changed its view so much that the leading article declared that there was now nothing for it but that we should all arm to the teeth and regiment ourselves for war! I leave the best to the last. On Tuesday of this week, the blackest day in our memory, the *Times*, instead of honestly saying that we had given way from fear, said:

> And finally the proposed modifications of the peace treaties, if they *were now carried out through general consent*, would illustrate and strengthen the principle of change achieved without violence, on which almost without exaggeration the whole future development of civilisation may be said to depend.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to F. J.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

He [Mr. Chamberlain] has made a surrender, not to Herr Hitler, but to justice—and that is not dishonourable.—*Times.*

Mr. Chamberlain has interviewed Herr Hitler. The Führer is fond of children. Why could not Mr. Chamberlain have taken with him Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose?—Letter in *Daily Mirror.*

The general character of the terms submitted to the Czechoslovak Government for their consideration cannot in the nature of things be expected to make a strong *prima facie* appeal to them.—*Times* leader.

Captain B. J. Daly, defending, pleading for leniency for Fdwards, declared that he was a good soldier.

"I submit that a man about to live with another man's wife is not in a mental condition to appreciate whether or not he is committing a crime," said Captain Daly.

Sentence will be promulgated.—*Evening Standard.*

Absolutely free. Lord's Prayer Disc, size of a threepenny bit; every word can be read. This unique novelty, along with bumper catalogue of jokes and tricks, is sent to every inquiry.—Advt. in *Times.*

When Hitler makes demands which are really aggressive and unreasonable it will be time enough to talk of war.—Letter in *Daily Herald.*

Praise be to God, and to Mr. Chamberlain. I find no sacrilege, no bathos, in coupling those two names.—Godfrey Winn in *Sunday Express.*

"Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind!" Boris says, "is an ideal lyric for swing music. It proves the timelessness of Shakespeare. In fact, he'd probably have his songs set in swing tempo anyway, for in spite of his timelessness, he was always strictly modern, and he aimed at the masses as well as the intellectuals."—*Melody Maker.*

HOME THOUGHTS FROM MADRID

THE placidity of Madrid after two years of semi-siege conditions is, perhaps, the most remarkable phenomenon in a remarkable war. Until very recently a city of a million inhabitants had been cut off from the world except by a road which, in parts, is only a country lane. It has been continually shelled, frequently bombed, and has lived on rations which are about half what the Englishman thinks is the least on which he could keep body and soul alive. Yet the inhabitants still go about their business unmoved. Life is more normal in Madrid to-day than it was a year ago, and considerably more normal than at the beginning of 1937. A light railway has now been built from Tarancon, some sixty miles away, a wonderful piece of wartime enterprise. The worst patches of the road have been improved, and *mirabile dictu* tarring operations were in progress last week. The theatres and cinemas are crowded during the summer nights, the streets are kept clean, the patches of garden are watered. The distribution of food-stuffs has improved, and it was extraordinary to find the biological laboratories carrying on complicated experiments in dieting. A visit to the Palace of Justice showed that the courts are still functioning, though there are very few cases, criminal or civil, in this segregated and orderly community. We watched an action against a dealer for profiteering. He was defended by counsel, and acquitted after a longish hearing.

For some weeks the "front" has been strangely quiet. No longer is one woken regularly at 5.30 a.m. by the early morning "strafe." The war has moved elsewhere, and the chief concern of the inhabitants is how they will face the cold of the coming winter, while the civil authorities are seriously worried about the tendency of evacuated women and children to drift back to the city. "Fascists don't squeal" we were informed by that eminent authority, Sir Arnold Wilson, who apparently believes that all Spaniards in Eastern Spain live in a state of terror because a few ill-conditioned Englishmen, like myself, have made our feeble protests against the bombing of civilians, and uttered our feeble hymn of hate against those of our fellow countrymen who condone, justify and encourage Italian and German "frightfulness." The Spaniards themselves take the whole business with a philosophy which no Northerner could equal.

The general position seems to be little understood in England. Germany, as an invading force, has faded out of the picture. She remains in reserve, her personnel employed more and more in the administration, her influence daily growing through the Phalangists, her few troops digging themselves in firmly both in Morocco and Northern Spain. Obviously she does not mind how long the war goes on. She is getting the minerals she wants, and strengthening her position at no serious expenditure of men or money. She is quite content to leave Italy, with such assistance as she can get from England, to carry out the increasingly difficult task of forcing an early conclusion. To do this Italy must use her only effective weapon—her air force operating from Majorca or the mainland. Her infantry seems to be more ineffective than ever, and they suffered a reverse, almost as striking as that at Guadalajara, when their troops were sent forward to take Tortosa. This incident does not seem to have got into the European press, but it was the alterations consequent upon this which enabled the Government to make their very successful counter-attack on the Ebro.

The bombing of the coastal towns has been thorough enough. Alicante last year was a crowded and rather gay little seaside town, full of refugees and extremely unwarlike. To-day it is almost deserted, the area of destruction reaching far away from the port where the wrecks of four or five British ships lie as a fitting memorial to the Anglo-Italian Pact. More distressing than the destruction of Alicante is the condition of some of the villages. People in England seem strangely unaware of what bombing really means. They forget that it is carried out by mere lads, not too well disciplined, but brought up to share Vittorio Mussolini's fondness for bombing as a sport, and a complete disregard for the human ants crawling about some thousands of feet below. The second point, which is seldom mentioned by our Wilsons and Londonderrys, is that bombers for their own safety will always unload somewhere in enemy territory, and if their objective proves dangerous they will choose any group of houses which looks an amusing or inviting mark. Nothing else could possibly explain the bombing of such places as Benidorm, Denya, or the now unhappily named Villajoyosa.

Perhaps the most distressing example of a village which has suffered in this way is Colmenar el Viejo. No one has ever suggested that this little place, noted for its picturesque situation some twenty miles west of Madrid, has any military interest. But it happens to lie on what was the German bombing route to Madrid, and on two occasions when driven off the city a squadron of bombers have simply dropped all their load on the village. In each case they made a complete shambles of the place. I have never seen anywhere such absolutely wanton destruction.

Thus Spain, south of what is called " the cut," is facing another winter's war with its usual fatalism, but with an increased confidence in the army, a confidence which must be shared by those who remember the troops eighteen months ago, and can see the extraordinary improvement. The new Spanish army must be taken seriously in European politics. They have shown that they can defend positions, and even attack against better equipped troops with complete command of the air. They have great courage, but they also have another great military virtue, which is going to be of growing importance. They can, like the rest of Spain, carry on indefinitely with the very minimum of food. The old joke about *una accituna, un azucarillo, y un vaso de agua*, about living on an olive, a sweet, and a glass of water, has entirely ceased to be a joke, and has become an important factor in European history. Here are men who can go into battle without the elaborate transport, the field kitchens, the lines of lorries which invite the attacks of enemy aeroplanes. The lamentable thing is that these men, who were our friends, are now more likely to be our enemies.

Although the healthy adult can carry on his work, can marry and have children, under these strange and confined conditions, yet the food shortage, and especially the lack of a few food constituents, operates very hardly on the young, the old, and the invalids. There is a lack of vitamin B in the Madrid diet which is leading to the prevalence of unusual diseases such as pellagra and beri-beri. The number of mildly tubercular children is increasing rapidly, most of them easily curable if proper medical attention and food were available. The diabetic cannot get his insulin, and must die. Many operations are impossible because the equipment is deficient, and Spain, before the war, looked to Germany for drugs and medical supplies of all sorts. The children are completely dependent on milk imported from abroad. They also need those commodities half food, half drug, such as yeast, liver extract, calcium, etc. It is in this way that the individual Englishman can help to counteract the effect of an Italian blockade for which his Government is largely responsible.

But it is impossible for an Englishman to be in Madrid and not to think of London. How would our seven millions survive a similar ordeal ? Would they remain as placidly courageous, and sit down to a prolonged food shortage under war conditions ? Are our preparations serious ? I turned up recently a collection of papers which our relief organisation had received in the early days of the war. They contained the first air-raid precautions issued in Madrid—all about gumming pieces of paper on your windows, making gas-proof room, etc. They are exactly like those which are now circulated in England, but no one in Spain would think of them except as a joke. With these were the early official notifications about the evacuation of Madrid. Another paper scheme which proved totally ineffective, but reads strangely like the lucubrations of the Home Office on this complicated and difficult subject.

Madrid. G. T. GARRATT

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Breaking with Geneva's firms,
We offer Nazis favoured terms
Let us lend to back your claim
England's honourable name.
For dirty deals both great and small
Our representative will call.
Orders carried out with speed,
Satisfaction guaranteed.
We obsequiously remain,
Daladier et Chamberlain.

SAGITTARIUS

NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT]

THANKS to the pact of *bon voisinage* which was signed by Count Ciano and Lord Perth earlier this year, the Italians are now obtaining all the assistance they require for overcoming Ethiopian resistance. They are obtaining financial assistance which enables them to purchase supplies and material ; and they are being given the facilities of communication and transport which make it possible for these supplies and material to reach their army. It was not without reason that Sir Archibald Sinclair, speaking in the House of Commons recently, denounced the pact as conceding Italy all the advantages she looked for from the Anglo-Italian Agreement without obliging her to offer any counterpart.

So far as British Somaliland is concerned, it is fairly well known that the road and port facilities granted by the local British authorities (acting on instructions from London) have helped to solve one of the chief problems of the new Italian Empire, by providing an alternative to the expensive, inadequate and partly French-controlled Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway. Less widely known but even more important is the decision of the Soudanese Government to open up commerce between the Soudan and Abyssinia. As the Soudan is an Anglo-Egyptian condominium the responsibility here is only partly Whitehall's. Nevertheless, it is the acquiescence of the British Government, following the Ciano-Perth pact, which has made the present volume of traffic possible. A recent visit to the Soudan convinced me that this is playing a decisive role in the Italian plan for "pacifying" Abyssinia.

At the confluence of the White and Blue Niles, starting point of all the river trade either to Jubaland or Gambella (the latter town, although situated in Ethiopian territory, has a British enclave), Khartoum is an admirable centre for gathering information about events in East Africa. I had not been there long before I discovered that it had become a main centre of transit for the supplies of food and material required by the Italian Army in Ethiopia. At the hottest time of year, when the inhabitants are used to avoiding the least effort, I found them working day and night. The wharves were piled high with merchandise, and every day saw the departure of heavily loaded *dahabiehs* and *gabarres*, the cargo of which, covered with thick matting, was destined for the Abyssinian frontier.

It was not easy to learn any details of this traffic. The British officials naturally were silent, and the Greek traders, who in the Soudan are as indispensable to the inquirer as the Syrians in French North Africa and the Indians in British East Africa, were for once on their guard. But in the end, after innumerable hours of conversation, when we discussed every subject under the sun but Abyssinia, I got one of them to talk. He told me that the Italians were now buying all their supplies through the Soudan, thanks to which they were able to continue their operations against the "rebels" in the central region. The purchases included flour, petrol, material for building roads, heavy tractors, tools, and building equipment. About the only goods they were not buying were arms and ammunition, of which a sufficient stock had already been accumulated in the Empire. And as the Ethiopians, who needed arms, could not pay for them, there was no traffic in this commodity.

Of still more interest was it to learn that the Italians were paying cash and in sterling. "They were poor before, but now they are rich," several people told me. In the last few months the Italian military administration must have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds. The money is paid over as soon as the goods are delivered in Ethiopian territory. Previously some of the payments were made in wireless sets and Fiat motor cars, which could not always be disposed of in the Soudan; but that practice seems to have stopped and there is now plenty of cash. Where does it come from? Not from Italy evidently. It was suggested to me that the Standard Oil Company, which had reluctantly to abandon the oil concession obtained from the Emperor by the English financier, Mr. Ricketts, might still be interested. My own view, however, is that the City of London is advancing money to the Italian Empire against a share in the profits should it ever pay a dividend. The untapped resources of Abyssinia are a vision which still haunts the minds of some financiers.

To what extent is the aid given by Britain—financial, commercial and administrative—helping the Italians to consolidate their position? When I got into Abyssinia from Kenya a few months ago things were looking bad for the conquerors. There was resistance in the centre, while in the wild south-western region the "occupation" consisted of a few isolated outposts, whose garrisons were frequently cut off from all communication with the outside world. The question of supplies was acute; for the new road between Massawa and Addis Ababa, which was intended to be the main line of communication between the capital and the Red Sea coast and thence to Europe, was far from safe. Moreover, every stick of material which came by that route had to pay a heavy toll to the Suez Canal Company.

The establishment of a liaison with the Soudan has changed all that. Supplies now arrive direct to the Italian garrisons stationed in Western Abyssinia. The army is thus able to occupy the border provinces and keep a close guard on the frontier. The Ethiopians who are still holding out in Amhara are cut off both from supplies and news. In the south-west the posts at Magi and Goré are no longer isolated. Italy is saving money and she has, thanks to the credits she has obtained abroad, more money to spend. A few months ago there was serious anxiety in Fascist circles as to the possibility of holding down the Empire, let alone developing it, without more capital. This fear would appear now to have been, at least partly, removed.

And yet the task of "pacification" is far from completed. As against the help which Italy has obtained from outside there is the serious deterioration in the morale of her own army. I had direct proof of this through an encounter with an Italian officer, whose patrol arrested me after I had managed to cross the frontier from the Soudan. He was thoroughly "fed up" with the whole business, and it was clear he was not the only one who felt the same. The Askaris have been deserting in large numbers and even the Italian soldiers are showing disloyalty.

A few months ago a Greek merchant was murdered in Khartoum. In the house of the murderer was discovered a revolver of Italian pattern. When asked how he had obtained it the criminal confessed he had bought it in Abyssinia, and added, laughing: "Give me the money and I will bring back a case full. The Italians are selling them to obtain pocket money." On the other hand, the Ethiopians are fighting with the courage of the desperate. They know now that there is nothing to hope for from Italian rule, for many of those who submitted believing in the Italian "pardon" have since been shot or deported. In these circumstances it seems likely that even with British help months may pass before the last resistance is conquered.

Correspondence

WAR FOR DEMOCRACY?

SIR,—I confess to having been convinced that another war "to make the world safe for democracy" could only have the same disastrous results as the last and must, in fact, destroy all that in Britain still deserves the name civilisation. The actual device adopted to avoid such a war, however, threatens to destroy that civilisation no less surely, if less dramatically. Great Britain is, it would seem, not merely to tolerate the violent—and for the aggressor costly and even perilous—dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. She is to assist the Nazi tyranny in imposing that dismemberment on the last outpost of formal democracy in Central Europe and to guarantee the political neutrality of the rump, presumably against Russian help, while its economic subjugation is peacefully completed. This bit of "foreign policy" must have internal repercussions the effects of which are perhaps already perceptible.

A docile press which, even a week ago, was displaying some objectivity in its news from Central Europe and its comments thereon, now, hailing Hitler's terms as "Chamberlain's peace plan," adopts uncritically the dictator's thesis about the Sudeten Germans. Is it premature to see in this change of tone the working of governmental controls, no less potent because extra-legal, in the interests of "Germanic" philosophy? Under a *de facto* alliance with Hitler against the Czechs and the Soviet Union, criticism of Hitlerism must be regarded as "disloyal embarrassment" of the Government's "mission of reconciliation." It can be quietly stifled without any provocative legislation or even regulations laid upon the table of the House by the gradual exclusion of Marxists (in Hitler's sense of any critic of Fascism) from access to the press and from preferment in institutions like universities, which enjoy subventions from the State, and the expulsion of the distinguished exiles who are to-day enriching our science and our art. Then, when a new war threat has created the needful state of panic and a new "peace plan" is needed to help Hitler "rescue the oppressed German minority" in, say, Schleswig (i.e., dismember Denmark), the theory of relativity can be quietly expunged from scientific literature published in Britain, our debt to pre-Aryan Indians and Sumerians suppressed in histories adjusted to an anglicised (? British Israelite) version of Hitler's racialism and art and letters "purged of Semitism."

German intellectuals who hailed Hitler as their saviour from Marxism are now helpless to protest against the consequent sterilisation of science and art. British intellectuals who preferred peace in alliance with Hitler to war in alliance with U.S.S.R., may all too easily have cause to wonder whether the bombed ruins of London and Berlin would not have been better than the skeleton of a civilisation condemned to stagnation by the denial of free enquiry. Still, it may not be too late to arouse the anti-Fascist forces to defend the spirit of British traditions in the interval of precarious "peace" so perilously purchased by the betrayal of the Czechs.

V. GORDON CHILDE

Department of
Prehistoric Archaeology,
University of Edinburgh.

SIR,—A visit to Spain last year convinced me of the utter futility of the war-method of righting wrong, however bitter, and ending aggression, however arrogant and oppressive. To meet aggression with counter-aggression merely means wholesale murder and incalculable suffering. Especially do the working class always stand to lose in such a process, because they are more numerous, live closer together, and are therefore more bombable, than other classes.

We are now on the point of being dragged into war, ostensibly "in defence of Czechoslovakia and of democracy," but really in order to maintain the French system of encirclement, which was devised against Germany at Versailles in 1919, and which has cursed the world ever since. The Czechoslovakian dominion over the Sudeten Germans is part of that system; and this also we are being called on to defend.

We all rightly deplore Nazi manners and methods; but we forget that these are in the main due to the French treatment of Germany at Versailles and afterwards. Has not the ghost of Clemenceau kept us chained long enough to the French chariot wheels? If we go to war on behalf of the French post-war arrangement of Europe, will it not constitute a major crime against humanity, for which in the logic of history we are bound to suffer? There are many of us who protested in 1919, and have protested ever since against the French anti-German policy of fear and force. Is it too late to believe that the other way, that of generosity, may even yet be tried?

I have spent sixteen years in India and considerable periods in Ireland. In both countries I have learnt that for one race or nation to rule another is fundamentally wrong. Are we to go to war now in order to defend the Czech rule over the Sudeten Germans? If we do so, we shall deserve what we get. But those who suffer most will be the working class. In their name, above all, men and women of good will should protest against our being drawn into this unjustifiable and disastrous war.

Woodbrooke Settlement,
Birmingham, 29.

JOHN S. HOYLAND

IMPERIALISM

SIR,—A policy of encirclement by Imperialist powers helped to rally moderate German sentiment to the support of its militarist leaders during the years which immediately preceded and followed the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. Because your journal has rightly emphasised how much the future depends on discrediting Hitler's policy among decent Germans who have no love for war or Jew-baiting, the following citations from two versions of his Nuremberg speech are instructive. One from the "speech in full" as reported in the *Star* is:

> When Germany wanted her colonies back they complained of the lot of the poor natives and they were not ashamed to bring the natives of their own colonies to reason by bombing them from aeroplanes.... Democracies forced coloured races to tolerate alien control, yet we are accused of being cruel in our methods when we try to get rid of the Jewish elements.

The other from the "text of his speech" in the *Scotsman* is:

> At the same time they do not hesitate to bring natives to reason with bombs. But those are civilising bombs, not the sort of bombs used in Abyssinia. . . . Since the days when we took over the Government a united front around Germany is standing against us.

The tragic irony of these words will be sufficiently clear to those who have lived in Africa, or have merely read the *Fact* brochure on *Empire* by Leonard Barnes. They are a just valuation of our artistic self portrait of the British "Commonwealth of Nations" as a gallant little family of democracies like New Zealand struggling shoulder to shoulder with their sister democracies of Scandinavia. The same philosophy of Nordic superiority is the articulate rationale of White Settler Policy in the African Empire and anti-Semitism in Germany. Indeed the malignant candour of Mr. Pirow has more than once reminded us that Germany has merely imitated the Tielmann Roos-Hertzog-Malan sequence of Acts against Miscegenation, Free Assembly and the exercise of the Cape Native Franchise.

The peace overtures of Conservative policy aim at the strategic defence of the British Empire, and even if it whets the German appetite for empire by offering Hitler a token colony, British Conservatism will not hesitate to sacrifice a million lives to keep its hold on Africa. The avowed international policy of Labour in the present crisis is the integrity of Czechoslovakia. The leaders of the Labour Party have therefore let thousands of people who are praying for peace believe they are willing to sacrifice a million lives to maintain the Collective Insecurity of the Versailles Injustice. So if British Imperialism is forced to make its last stand in the war which ended Western civilisation, Labour has muzzled in advance all propaganda in favour of a non-imperialist and lasting peace. It has manufactured the slogans which will give our Blimps a blank cheque. "The next war like the last war is a war to end war" *und so weiter*.

A war over Czechoslovakia with Conservatism in the saddle would be a war to crush a rising competitor in the Imperialist game. Once it is started all opposition to an Imperialist settlement would be swamped in the need for "national unity." Faced with this dilemma the only policy which a British Socialist party can logically pursue is to challenge Hitler's war bluff and Chamberlain's peace bluff by persisting in the demand for an immediate world conference to build a lasting peace on four foundations:

(i) Repudiation of the Versailles settlement of cultural minorities and recognition of the common war guilt of all nations which pursue the path of Imperialism.

(ii) Repudiation of collective security based on sanctions exercised by Imperialist nations with sovereign powers to increase their armaments.

(iii) Creation of educational machinery for promoting cultural and economic development of backward communities on a basis of trusteeship in preparation for self government within the framework of world government.

(iv) Creation by common contribution of international trusts to secure common ownership of the production of all explosives, the production of all aeroplanes and dirigibles and the maintenance of all aerial transport services.

If the radical parties of "democratic" countries continue to put their faith in a policy of terrorising the dictator states into good behaviour, deepening resentment towards and distrust of the "democracies" will weld the German people into a firmer conviction that Hitler is their deliverer. We shall be driven to the final madness of a world war in which democratic sentiment and trade union organisation will be sacrificed to the inexorable logic of military tactics.

At the end of the last war, Socialists of all countries cashed in on the disillusionment and horror of the preceding years. They could go to the people, saying, "*We warned you of this horror. It is capitalism which robbed you of your sons, your lovers and fathers. We now ask you to join with us in building a new world.*" In the aftermath of the next war the men who will rule Britain may be men who can say: "It was the Socialists who sacrificed their country to perpetuate the historic injustice of Versailles. Because of them lethal gases have blotted out three-quarters of our population and left a million blind men groping in hunger.

LANCELOT HOGBEN
J. F. HORRABIN
RAYMOND POSTGATE

THE BETRAYAL

SIR,—A morning and an evening paper of different political complexions both assure me that the "plan" agreed on between Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier is complete surrender to Hitler. Not only is the Sudetenland to be ceded to Germany, but Czechoslovakia is to be compelled to sever her alliance with Russia with the object (for what other is conceivable?) of placing her wholly at the mercy of her new "guarantors." I suppose it must be true. I am still rubbing my eyes, as I am one of those who had retained the belief that there were depths below which this country would not sink. I now see that the abyss is bottomless.

Hitherto I have not been a pacifist, but I take it that for every Englishman who is also a Christian the pacifist case is henceforth proved. It must be the duty of a Christian to be willing to die; it *may* be his duty to kill (even by modern methods) in order that wrong may not prevail. To flatter violence, acquiesce in fraud and aid extortion for the purpose of avoiding these evils and afterwards to face up to them in the cold cause of self-preservation may be the instinct of an animal. Only a lunatic could imagine it to be his duty.

OWEN BARFIELD

A.R.P.

SIR,—Mr. Kingsley Martin, in his review of Professor Haldane's book, states: "A.R.P. on the necessary scale must be democratic. It cannot be imposed from above."

With such a sentiment one can only concur, with the cautious proviso—"if possible." It is a little unfortunate, however, that neither Mr. Martin nor Professor Haldane has devoted any attention to the methods by which an efficient A.R.P. scheme could be organised and carried out in a "democratic" manner.

The present Government schemes are, as is generally recognised outside official circles, undemocratic. It is not too much to say that the A.R.P. Act created dangerous mechanisms and precedents for a far-reaching suppression of civil liberties. But it is difficult to see how a scheme of the type proposed by Professor Haldane and approved by Mr. Martin could be put into practice without the creation of even more dangerous mechanisms and precedents than already exist.

The key point of any A.R.P. organisation is, as has so often been emphasised by Government spokesmen, the air raid warden. The present position as regards the recruiting and maintenance of air raid wardens under the Government schemes is highly unsatisfactory. To quote the memorandum on A.R.P. presented to the Leeds City Council by the local committee of the Communist Party:

> It is clear that the existence of a large body of persons under the control of ex-Army officers and the police, with large but ill-defined powers of entry and search of private houses, and with opportunities for acquiring information with regard to the views and opinions of members of the public, might under certain circumstances constitute a grave menace to the democratic rights of the people.

This is a cautious enough statement, in view of the fact that the total army of air raid wardens, when finally recruited, will, as pointed out by the Cambridge scientists, outnumber the entire Army, Navy and Air Force.

I have searched in vain through the numerous proposals concerning A.R.P. that have been made in recent months from Left-wing sources for a solution of this problem; the only one that has been offered is that of election of wardens by adults in the area to be controlled.

This seems an obvious solution; in fact, it involves the introduction of a completely new principle into English local government, that of election of officials for administrative posts. If we demand that air raid wardens be elected, then we must also demand, on purely logical grounds, that firemen, sanitary inspectors and police constables also be elected.

What principles, moreover, are to guide our election of an air raid warden? Would the elections be run on the usual political party lines? Is a Socialist necessarily a better air raid warden than a Conservative, or vice versa? Or are we to judge the candidates purely on personal characters? And, if so, how many of us know each of our 499 neighbours well enough to judge of his suitability for the post? Until these problems, and the many others arising out of them, are solved, one may well be justified in considering that democratic air raid precautions are impossible. And many of us would rather have the somewhat battered democracy left to us than a fool-proof scheme of shelters and protective restrictions.

PHILIP F. DYER

York House, Theobald's Road, W.C.1.

THE ECONOMICS OF FASCISM

SIR,—Mr. John Strachey's article in your issue of September 3rd, 1938, on the "Economic Bases of Fascism," like nearly everything else I have read on the German economic situation emanating from writers with strong Left-wing sympathies, is vitiated by an ignorance of the facts

I write neither as an anti-Communist, nor as a pro-Fascist, but as an economist who has been making an intensive study recently of the economics of National Socialist Germany. Mr. Strachey pleads for "a realistic study of what is actually happening within the Fascist economies." By all means, yes, provided that he means by "realistic" that which is in conformity with the truth, and not a garbled version of the truth designed to support a particular thesis.

The essence of my disagreement with Mr. Strachey arises in connection with the following sentences in his article:—

> Mr. Keynes has shown in theory, and the Nazis have shown in practice, that a possible temporary solution to this problem [that of investment in a capitalist economy] is offered if the State borrows a substantial proportion of this accumulated, but uninvestable, surplus from the individual capitalists. The State then uses this surplus for some form of unproductive expenditure. Mr. Keynes playfully suggests pyramid building, or the search for bank notes secreted by treasury officials at the bottom of filled-in coal mines. The Nazis build armaments.

He concludes by saying that Fascist regimes "carry further certain characteristics of monopoly capitalism; characteristics which tend towards the solution of the contradictions of capitalism by means of the establishment of a servile society occupying its surplus labour upon building pyramids or armaments."

Now to begin with, Mr. Keynes has never said that the only way a capitalist State can provide sufficient investment is by unproductive expenditure. What he did say is that a country with a large amount of idle resources would do better to undertake even useless investment, if such devices as low interest rates and abundant creation of credit failed to stimulate effective demand. But he has always made it perfectly clear that, even under these conditions, productive investment is much to be preferred to unproductive.

Turning to Germany, it is simply not true to say that *to-day* the Nazis are making armaments in order to create employment. By the summer of 1937 Germany had already reached a state of full employment as a result undoubtedly, in part, of rearmament. But from then on her expenditure on armaments has been at the cost of other useful things which she has had to deny herself, because she has regarded armaments for the time being as more important to the State than *alternative* forms of investment. Every few thousand marks spent on a munition factory has meant a house the fewer for the German worker. I have read dozens of statements by German statesmen and writers, from Hitler downwards, showing that one and all understand perfectly clearly that armament expenditure is a most important factor in diverting labour and capital from more productive uses. The Germans have available enough productive investments, waiting to be carried out, to preserve full employment for many years to come after rearmament has ceased.

If Mr. Strachey would look for a moment at Soviet Russia, where a still higher proportion of the national income is said to be absorbed in armaments, he might realise that it is political and not economic "necessities" which, in Russia as in Germany, are causing the withdrawal of such vast resources from economically productive to economically unproductive uses.

I believe also that Mr. Strachey is profoundly wrong in saying that the German economic system is run in the interest of "a limited number of the great capitalistic trusts which have become almost perfectly fused with the State apparatus." National Socialism is pro private enterprise, but anti large-scale industrialists, whom it only tolerates because it cannot under existing conditions do without their aid. The one significant thing about the recent Stock Exchange collapse of the shares of the great German armament firms is that it reflects the realisation that the profits of big industry are going to be cut progressively in future.

I repeat, I am in no sense an apologist for the National Socialist regime, whose tenets I do not share, but I can see nothing but harm in "realistic" studies which pervert the truth.

St. John's College, Cambridge. C. W. GUILLEBAUD

BACK TO THE LAND

SIR,—As a disheartened farmer I have read with great interest Mr. Easterbrook's articles which have been appearing in your recent issues, and which I think it will be agreed have shown what could be done with our land if confidence were restored by a Government which would work out a long-term policy for agriculture.

The most vital issue at present is, it seems to me, that agricultural policy should be taken out of the sphere of party politics and placed under the direction of an inter-party commission representing all the interests concerned, including the retailer and the consumer.

All parties seem now to agree that a thriving agriculture is of vital importance to our national well-being, and surely it is not too much to hope that all who are interested would sacrifice something to this end.

The situation which has been created by the piecemeal quota-subsidy policy of the present Government is just the worst possible for long-term improvement. At the present moment all the help the farmer is receiving in subsidies is going into the pockets of the landlords on the one hand, who are enabled to keep up rents, and to the farm workers on the other, who have a fixed wage. If nothing at all had been done for agriculture the tenant farmer would have been in nearly the same position as he is to-day, as rents and wages would have fallen to an economic level.

The only farmers who are doing well to-day, other than those in some specialised branches, are the very ones who should be discouraged, i.e., the subsidy hunters who happen to get a farm cheap and then farm it out, and the stock raiser with a stock-exchange mind who benefits by the alternating optimism and despair and buys and sells his stock at the right moment.

It is a tragic experience, living in a district of traditional good farming, seeing agriculturalists being forced into farming practice which they know to be wrong for their land because high farming and the intelligent use of the plough in maintaining fertility and growing good grass no longer pays.

I would like to suggest to anyone interested in Mr. Easterbrook's advocacy of alternate husbandry at its best that they should make a tour of the south-east of Scotland before it is too late, to see what could be done in many parts of England if good farming was encouraged and bad farming penalised.

Mainhouse Farm, H. SCOTT PLUMMER
Kelso, Roxburghshire.

THE CHANNEL CROSSING

SIR,—I would like to endorse the remarks of Mr. Raymond Postgate and Mr. Donald Duce regarding the cross-Channel services of the Southern Railway.

My husband and I crossed from St. Malo at the end of August and after spending, with several hundred other passengers, a night strangely reminiscent of emigrant steerage conditions of the past, we were hardly amused in the morning to read the following notice:

> This deck is for the use of First-class Passengers unless occupied by cattle . . . or other obstructions.

34 Claremont Close, N.1. C. V. EVANS

WINIFRED HOLTBY MEMORIAL FUND

SIR,—The Appeal for a Memorial to the late Winifred Holtby which you were good enough to publish, has realised £184 12*s.* 1*d.*

The Memorial Committee feel that the fund should assist the promotion of some interest which Winifred Holtby had very much at heart. It is well known that one of her deepest wishes was to help forward the social and economic progress of the African people. Any scheme should be of a permanent character, should serve women no less than men and should involve no future charge on the Fund. At the present moment two schemes are before the Committee for the Memorial and a decision will shortly be taken: they are:

(*a*) A bay in the library of Fort Hare College, in which a portrait of Winifred Holtby might be hung and arrangements made for an annual or biennial Memorial lecture.

(*b*) A location library in Johannesburg under the control of the Native Affairs Committee of the municipality; such a library to be called the Winifred Holtby Memorial Library, which would become a centre of W.E.A. work among the Africans of the location.

The Committee would be grateful if you would publish this letter for the information of subscribers to the Fund.

Friends of Africa,
Finsbury House,
Blomfield Street, E.C.2.

C. RODEN BUXTON
A. CREECH JONES
F. W. PETHICK-LAWRENCE
VERA BRITTAIN
G. E. G. CATLIN
JULIUS LEWIN
J. F. HORRABIN
CAROL JOHNSON

Miscellany

SEPTEMBER EVENING; RUMOURS OF WAR

As the golden grass burns out
In a cooling ash of dew
The lovers disembrace
And face the evening view.

The long plain down
Shaped like a thigh
Slopes towards the sea,
And away up in the sky

Too small to be heard
A plane like a silver spark
Bright in the sun's last rays
Drifts eastward into the dark;

A single stack of hay
In the valley at their feet
Like a primitive small church
Looks simple, strong and neat;

Inside a wattled fold
A flock of sheep
Stand, stir, or lie
Fleece against fleece asleep;

Lights in the bungalows;
A constant hum of cars;
Mallow flowers in the grass;
One or two stars.

With the fading day
All has grown clear:
That everything is vital
And infinitely dear.

Looking round, the girl thinks
" How precious to me
My home and my work and each thing
I can touch and can see,

George's navy-blue suit,
And my white linen dress,
And the way that his eyebrows grow—
This is my happiness! "

And he, clasping her hand,
More grave than before,
Says, " Yes, I will fight
(If there is to be a war)

For all that has gone to make
Us, and this day."
Then arm in arm along the path
Silent they saunter away.

WILLIAM PLOMER

COUNTRY NOTES

Cornucopia

SUMMER goes down in a last splendid burst of lavishness. Even this year, about which so many complaints were heard, I could gather enough natural food within half an hour to keep several people from starvation for several days. The William pears need little more than a night in a dark cupboard before they turn sweet and yellow. The hedgerows are already hung with the black and red clusters of shining blackberries, and the nuts in their pale green sheaths are more abundant than I have seen them for many years. The fallen maggoty ones crack underfoot, as we tread reaching up to pull down the sound ones hanging overhead. The little white umbrellas of the mushrooms are dotted all over the fields. On the garden walls the peaches are no less rosy than the bricks, and the figs have turned as brown as a piece of old velvet. Out in the orchard, standing just high enough to have escaped the May frosts that ruined the blossom in the valleys, big green cooking apples drop with a thud into the grass among the violet cups of the autumn crocus.

Peace and plenty, if only for the moment.

Waste?

I find that people vary considerably in their attitude towards the fruits of the earth. Some, true country-dwellers, put them to jealous use, and a well-stocked store-room is the result. There are few sights more agreeable than shelves neatly loaded with glass jars as coloured as jewels with jam, juice and jellies; the ruby of raspberry, the aquamarine of gooseberry, the fire-opal of marmalade, the pearls of white currant. Then there are—or should be—the big brown crocks full of chutney and of beans layered in salt; the pails of eggs preserved in isinglass. There should also be large marrows laid aside; and perhaps one of them may be hanging up, disembowelled and stuffed with brown sugar, destined eventually to produce a decoction of which it is said that one drink is quite enough and two a great deal too much. Add a few dangling bunches of dried herbs, and the store-room begins to wear the aspect it ought to wear. An air of proper pride presides over it; a quiet, independent air; a practical expression of trouble taken.

But to-day few are left to take such trouble. Why layer beans in salt when a tin of peas can be bought for 8½*d.*? Why bother about blackberries when canned peaches arrive miraculously and cheaply from California and the Cape? Why bother to cut the down out of bulrushes when Kapok cushions can be bought for a few pence? So, gradually, the traditions are dying out even amongst the country people.

From the town-dweller one expects, and gets, a different point of view. It horrifies the town-dweller to observe the wastage that goes on. To him, unaccustomed to the lavishness of Nature in potential foodstuffs, the free feast offered suggests nothing but perplexity and envy. "How can you leave all those good apples lying there?" he says in righteous surprise. "How can you allow half your vegetables to run to seed? Why don't you send them to a hospital if you don't want them yourself? You don't realise what they cost to buy in a shop."

He is right, and yet wrong. Right, because it is true that sufficient advantage is nowadays not taken of many things which we could have for nothing (nothing, that is, but our own labour). Wrong, because in his ignorance he frequently does not know the reason. He does not realise that the windfalls are bruised and thus not worth the gathering except for jam. He has never been accustomed to let a proportion of his vegetables run to seed so that he may harvest it—another free gift—for next year's crop. There are many explanations the countryman could give him.

One thing, however, always does surprise me, and that is the indifference with which the hop-pickers regard the mushroom. I had always believed that mushrooms were considered a delicacy when you could not just wander out and collect them in the fields but had to buy them from the greengrocer; I discovered, on the contrary, that the invasion of Londoners did not even recognise them for what they were but amused themselves with kicking them over with the toe of their boot while walking along. There they lay, broken and scattered, the lovely pink undersides, like fishes' gills, turned black and sodden. I suppose that, growing the right way up, they looked very different from the tumbled sullied heap in the greengrocer's basket. I pointed out the lost opportunity to a party of pickers from Bethnal Green. "What! them mushrooms?" they said incredulously. "Why, we thought they was toadstools."

Departure

The pickers have nearly finished their job and will be leaving us at the end of this week. No longer shall we see the red light of their fires burning in the distance, nor, on a Saturday night, shall I be able to walk down to their huts, sit with them round the brushwood fire, and listen to their jokes and their songs. It is a scene which, with a difference, always carries me back to a ranch in California, where under the shelter of a great rock the cowboys would light their bonfire and sit round chanting endless sagas of the trail. There is no great rock here, and the stars are less enormous, but even in the tameness of my own familiar fields the sole illumination of the flames casts a wild beauty over the rough faces and the coloured scarves. The doors of the huts stand open, a little oil-lamp revealing each miniature interior; the head of a sleepy child droops suddenly; an armful of fresh brushwood makes the embers flare; the plaintive notes of the accordion continue to rise and fall. It is nearly two o'clock in the morning; the jokes, the dancing, and the ribald songs have ceased; the songs are all sentimental now—eternal Sehnsucht and eternal pain.

I shall miss the hoppers. V. SACKVILLE-WEST

SUNNYSIDE

"Dear Octopus," at the Queen's Theatre

MISS DODIE SMITH has a wonderful gift for painting bourgeois life *couleur de rose*. You realise more fully than ever that your lot has been cast in pleasant places, as you motor home from the theatre to your desirable residence at Wimbledon or Sevenoaks. The children have been worrying you a little lately—Jill talks like a positive Socialist, and Simon's Cambridge friends seem, well, a little peculiar: moreover your parents-in-law have come to live only half-an-hour away, and family gatherings promise to be very frequent. But now you feel reassured: the young things are only being young, and blood is thicker than water, isn't it? All that is needed, when things are a teeny bit difficult, is to keep one's sense of humour. . . .

Those who live outside the charmed circle of the comfortable Philistines are apt to be unduly exasperated by Miss Dodie Smith's flattering *tableaux vivants*. For the stockbroking world in which the names of Marx and Mozart, Freud and St. Teresa are all equally ignored, seems to them even more arid than it is. After all, men and women can have remarkable, even heroic, virtues, though they read nothing but the *Tatler*, and listen to nothing but Reginald Foort. But the fact remains that plays like *Call It a Day* and *Dear Octopus* are based upon a falsity, which one can hardly believe is undeliberate. Miss Dodie Smith is obviously very knowing, and it must be skill rather than luck that makes her so regularly offer to the Dress Circle such subtly soothing syrup. In her new play, for instance, old Mrs. Randolph's companion, a good self-effacing soul no longer very young has for years been in love with the clever son of the house; and suddenly he finds himself in love with her, merely to provide a happy ending. At all costs everything has to be for the best, in the best of all possible suburbs. (Fortunately we are spared the scene when his relations express their enchantment with this brilliant match.) Miss Smith has set out to write a play about "an ordinary English family"—there are fourteen of them, of whom only two are even a little disagreeable, and one of these is a child. The method is naturalistic—we are continually, and successfully, invited to recognise familiar foibles and all too familiar thoughts; but the family is so little ordinary that it would win the Dunmow Flitch in a canter.

Dear Octopus contains some excellent scenes: three children are painting at a table, three grown-ups appear, give advice, begin to help, and in three minutes are seated at the table while the children loaf disconsolately in the background. But the characters are thin as paper and merely theatrical. Moreover there is so little action that a squabble between sisters-in-law appears wildly exhilarating. Miss Smith has been looking at Chehov with more admiration than understanding. We are treated to many just if unsurprising reflections upon growing old, upon remembering one's childhood, upon Time, but there is never a hint of the imagination that lifts Chehov's comedies into poetry. Where the Russian playwright makes us generalise the pity that we feel for his characters into pity for the whole condition of man, Miss Smith only makes us feel how much nicer, and cleverer, we are than is generally supposed. Her observant eye and wonderfully slick sense of the theatre, are likely to make this play a success, but how unfavourably it compares with *Spring Meeting*, to which I have just paid a delightful second visit. As for Chehov. . . .

But *Dear Octopus* is saved by the excellence of the acting. Miss Valerie Taylor, Miss Angela Baddeley, Miss Muriel Pavlow (a little girl) and Mr. John Gielgud are brilliant. None of them has a fat part, but they all convey depths of feeling much greater than their lines suggest. Miss Taylor's scene with Miss Pavlow is the best acted in the play, Miss Baddeley beautifully expresses the untheatrical quality of mild goodness and Mr. Gielgud proves that a Star can be artist enough to let us forget his station in the firmament. Miss Nan Munro, Miss Kate Cutler, Miss Annie Esmond, Miss Margaret Murray, Miss Madge Compton and Miss Una Venning are all admirably cast, while Mr. Leon Quartermaine has nothing to do and does it as prettily as possible. There remains Dame Marie Tempest, whose reputation will naturally bring her innumerable admirers to the Queen's Theatre. All too often she has been content to appear in plays, usually not very good plays, written especially to display her talents; and she is to be congratulated on her courage in undertaking now what is not "a Marie Tempest part." But disappointingly we are obliged to confess that she reveals no powers beyond those with which we are familiar—the flawless timing, the twinkling eye, the unsurpassed skill in putting a smart line across. When she seeks to express deep feeling, we may admire the exhibition of technique, but we remain utterly untouched. And the scene in which she hopefully asks her husband if he has not yet come to share her deep religious beliefs only just fails to be grotesque. Mr. Glen Byam Shaw, in conjunction with the author, has produced the play with great skill, and the sets by Motley are entirely appropriate. ROGER MARVELL

LITHOGRAPHS IN COLOUR

Continuez. That is what le maréchal MacMahon said to the black cadet at St. Cyr, to whom he had been advised to say something encouraging: "*C'est vous le nègre; c'est très bien, continuez.*" That is what everyone who cares for visual art, and hopes to bring it back into that world where before the age of machinery it played a part—the world of small houses, shops and lodgings—will be inclined to say to the artists who at the Leicester Galleries are showing their experiments in colour-lithography.

For it is probable that these artists, and amongst them are some of our best, were they to sit down and repeat themselves would make twice as good a job of it. Mostly their works are experiments; and the only criticism I have to make is the obvious one, that, generally, the artists are not at home in their medium. The technique of lithography is not particularly difficult, though the technique of colour-lithography is more complicated than that of black and white, and the probability is that by this time these artists have learnt it: they have learnt in the process of creating these agreeable and incredibly cheap objects—prices range from five and twenty shillings to a guinea and a half. Problems arise mainly from the necessity of making a separate drawing on the stone, or zinc plate, for each colour, and from having to calculate the effect of the superimposition of colours. The latter is all important because by adroit superimposition are obtained the peculiar and most ravishing qualities of the art: that the epithet is not too strong will be admitted by anyone who calls to mind certain colour-lithographs by Bonnard and Vuillard. Naturally, artists working in this medium for the first or second time have not dared to take full advantage of its possibilities. A perfectly successful coloured lithograph has some of the delicious dryness, lightness and sure-handedness of a fresco; too many of these resemble oil-paintings. Perhaps Ivon Hitchens alone has succeeded in exploiting the medium for all it is worth. He has found a design well suited to the method, and has rendered it with great skill and taste. The result is a real coloured lithograph, and it is delightful. Mr. Piper, too, shows himself a thoroughly competent workman; but, without disrespect for his undeniable talent, one may admit that, as an artist, he is hardly of the same class.

It will be instructive to compare these works, direct expressions of the artist's sensibility, with the admirable posters—often by the same artists—produced for Shell-Mex and the Underground Railway. These are not direct expressions; the artist makes a picture which highly trained and prodigiously skilful artisans reproduce stroke for stroke. The result is extraordinary; it is a triumph of human patience and dexterity; but it is not a work of art as these are works of art. Once I thought otherwise. Indeed, I have, hanging before me, a reproduction in chromo-lithography of a picture by Bonnard, done for the Marees Society by "Ganymede," a publishing enterprise formerly directed by Herr Julius Meier-Graefe which for accuracy and ingenuity has, in my opinion, never been equalled. I used to boast that this reproduction was indistinguishable from an original. I boast no more. Years of confrontation have taught me to distinguish between a reproduction and an original only too well. Lacking that mysterious life which the hand of an artist gives to his slightest touch, the reproduction becomes a mere thing; sensibly it is machine-made.

You will not become bored—not at all events in this peculiarly distressing way—with these first-hand lithographs; for they are works of art, as authentic as oil-paintings or water colours, and they make their authenticity felt. Wherefore, if it be not too presumptuous, I would advise anyone with a few pounds to spare and an itch for collecting to make this experiment: buy, for example, *The Bus Stop* by Ardizzone, *Arrangement* by Frances Hodgkins, *The Schoolroom* by Vanessa Bell, *Still Life* by Ivon Hitchens—and hang them in the bathroom. I would add *Bears at Tea*, a work of considerable accomplishment, were I sure the collector would be one who could stomach archness in art. He might find *The Sick Duck* by Graham Sutherland, another who claims acquaintance with the process, more to his taste; and he would do himself credit by acquiring Paul Nash's *Landscape*, albeit that thoughtful and imaginative painter is not yet master of the craft. Should the experiment turn out well—and few objects of art are pleasanter or more comprehensible than good coloured lithographs, or cheaper—the next step would be to get a portfolio and buy some more. The collector will thus be able to change periodically his company. Also he will have the satisfaction of knowing that he has acquired for a few pounds a collection more precious and far more exhilarating than that of many a millionaire who paid thousands for his. Only the artists must collaborate: heeding the field-marshal's excellent advice, they must continue. CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"A Royal Divorce," at the Carlton

A Royal Divorce—an English film directed by Herbert Wilcox—claims to follow faithfully the story of Napoleon and Josephine Beauharnais. On the whole, the claim is justified, except that, in the desire to present Napoleon as a "great lover," it conceals an essential fact: from the time when he became consul for life (in 1802) he had always kept open the possibility of a divorce for dynastic reasons, and when their marriage was celebrated with religious rites on the eve of his coronation, he contrived that the absence of the parish priest should constitute a legal flaw of which he subsequently made full use. Evidently this morsel of Napoleonic guile might have stuck in the public's throat. But it is not any tampering with historical truth that lifts this film into the ranks of the sublimely silly, but its extraordinary casting, dialogue and direction. No one could have failed to recognise a fine actress in the Fran Dodsworth of Ruth Chatterton, nor will Pierre Blanchar's genius be doubted by those who saw *Crime et Châtiment* and *Carnet de Bal*. But nothing can reconcile us to a Josephine who is just a plump, mischievous Southern belle and a Bonaparte with an accent and a lisp. When they meet, he tells her fortune: " I see a mawwaige with one of the gweat ones of Fwance." Hearing his name, her brows knit in a puzzled American frown: " How d'ya spell it? " she asks. When she has sung him a Creole song or two and leant, with dangerous coquetry, upon the raised lid of the harpsichord, the trick is done. On his wedding night however Napoleon gets a raw deal: chased off the historic four-poster by Josephine's pet dog, he has to curl up, still booted and spurred, on a very short settee. A good scene of the Bonaparte family squabbling just before his coronation is followed by Josephine's suggestion that the girls will soon consent to carry her train if their brothers are promised kingdoms. " A good idea! " says Napoleon; " Spain, Naples, Rome; yes, just enough to go round." After the ceremony, " It was a beautiful day," remarks the Empress Fran, "and I certainly did enjoy myself." Period flavour: Josephine still clings to her harpsichord at Malmaison in 1813, six years after Beethoven's *Apassionata*. Solitary compensation: Frank Cellier's smooth and subtle Talleyrand. Conclusion: *not* suitable for exhibition to adult audiences.

PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

" The Corn is Green," at the Duchess

Mr. Emlyn Williams has taken a subject which appears to have no appeal to the theatrical public, and made of it a play that is likely to be a great theatrical success. He has done this, moreover, without either vulgarising his subject, or making it pretentious. A highly educated Victorian woman starts a school in her house for the illiterate miners of a Welsh village, and she is rewarded by finding a pitboy with extraordinary intellectual powers, who by the end of the play has won an Oxford scholarship. The drama depends upon the confrontation of their characters—the woman, an English spinster, a feminist of her period, superficially hard and dry, often tactless, but consumed not only with idealism but with a pure devotion to the promising youth: the boy, a mercurial Welshman, with the poetic feeling and unsteadiness of his people, sometimes rebellious against his governessy benefactress, but passionately excited by knowledge. A " situation " is provided by a Cockney slut whom he gets with child, thus all but wrecking his chance to escape from the darkness of the pits to sweetness and light. Mr. Emlyn Williams succumbs to the temptations of the theatre at one point only, in the final scene, where the Englishwoman, who adopts his child, says he must never return to see her. This is a tasteless and unconvincing exaggeration of the sacrifices she must make. Elsewhere the relationship is treated with constant delicacy of feeling. Dame Sybil Thorndike gives her best performance for years: she never sentimentalises her part, and commands absolutely our belief in a very unusual character. The author is hardly less brilliant in the smaller role of the pitboy; he has produced the play himself, and controls his own performance scrupulously. Miss Betty Jardine, Miss Kathleen Harrison, Miss Christine Silver, Mr. Frederick Lloyd and Mr. John Glyn-Jones are all highly effective. In this most enjoyable comedy Mr. Emlyn Williams shows imagination and intellect as well as an acute sense of the theatre.

"Henry V," at Drury Lane

Over and over again the glorification of English honour and courage in this play seemed unbearably ironical. Perhaps Henry V should have been made up as Hitler, and the French King as Mr. Chamberlain.

> O England!—model to thy inward greatness,
> Like little body with a mighty heart—
> What mightst thou do, that honour would thee do,
> Were all thy children kind and natural!

Since the reign of Charles II there has been no moment when *Henry V* would have seemed so painfully inappropriate. Unluckily this production is not calculated to revive our spirit. For it seems based upon the Edwardian notion that the public would swallow Shakespeare only if dished up with a prodigality of realistic scenery, costumed supers and catchy tunes. The Old Vic and Mr. Gielgud have done much to demolish this delusion, and we are not confident that this *Henry V* will enjoy such success as to encourage further productions of a similar kind. If a new and larger public for Shakespeare could really be attracted by the methods used at Drury Lane, we might not feel justified in complaining of their vulgarity. But those who enjoy this *Henry V* will be enjoying not Shakespeare but scenery and the personality of Mr. Novello; for a considerable portion of the text was incomprehensible from the twelfth row of the stalls and hardly a single speech was given its proper value. The result was inevitably tedious. Mr. Frederick Bennett as Fluellen and Miss Veronica Brady as Mrs. Quickly gave the best performances. Many of the costumes were successfully picturesque.

" Serena Blandish," at the Gate

Serena Blandish at the Gate Theatre is a short, sparkling, society farce, with a sharp edge to it. It has witty lines and one or two situations where the satire bites. The wit, the characters, the situations, have been extracted by Mr. Behrman from that amusing and original *conte*, of which the full title was, you may remember, *Serena Blandish, Or the Difficulty of Getting Married*, by a Lady of Quality. The lady in question, it is no secret now, was the author of *National Velvet*. The word *conte*, with its French eighteenth-century associations, describes that brilliant little fantasia, which had one defect: a too uncritical sympathy with girls who take for granted that for them there is but one career—marriage. How to induce a man to keep you for life? That is the problem of all Serenas. But for this Serena, though she is attractive, it is quite insoluble. She, in spite of having most excellent preceptors (Martin, the philosophic butler of the Countess Flor di Folio and Mr. Traub, the jeweller, who regards her as an investment), has a nature too open to lay man-traps, and too generous to ask return for her favours. These she is apt to grant with a docility that will strike some as rather shocking, others as rather sweet; her little head is scheming, but her heart is sound and soft.

She was most prettily, touchingly, amusingly, interpreted by Miss Vivien Leigh. And when Serena's moment came; when, reckless of results, she yielded to a genuine infatuation, Miss Leigh

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acted her transformation from a demure, bewildered, a moral child into a young creature glittering with self-confidence and joy, so convincingly, that it was little wonder Mr. Traub instantly proposed upon the stage (too late) and that the audience was charmed. Of course Miss Jeanne de Casalis, who has a strong sense of humour, as well as technique, made the most of the fantastic Countess. Mr. Lawrence Hannay imparted to the butler, Martin, a certain reptilian coldness, effective in its way, though foreign to that character as he appears in the book. But then play and book differ in most important respects; and those who had not read the book should have been satisfied with Mr. Hanray: he filled his part. Not so Mr. Steward Granger as Lord Ivor Cream. His amiable and solid personality did not permit him to turn into a polished bounder, a dismally bored Don Juan, a vulgar aristocrat. Nevertheless the scene between his Lordship and Serena is so inevitably pointful that even then it told; the satire may have been robbed of its finish, but it was not robbed of its point. If the times permit enjoyment of such commentary on life as *Serena Blandish* provides, the play-goer might do worse than visit the Gate Theatre for amusement. There he will enjoy some wit and pointful extravagance, and see at least one very pretty thing, the acting of Miss Vivien Leigh.

"Paprika," at His Majesty's

Mr. Maschwitz Hungarian goulash consists largely of potato, and the little meat it contains is clearly Empire-killed. But the spice is laid on with a will, and even the most fastidious diner should be ravished by the gorgeousness of the casserole. Sam Goldwyn would love *Paprika.* 145 Toffs and Magyars prance, posture or merely pose in the picturesque trappings of late-Victorian England, or the musical-comedy splendour of traditional Austria-Hungary, while the Abbé Liszt and the Empress Elizabeth twinkle like familiar stars through the whirling nebula of Mr. Maschwitz' spendthrift magnificence. Czigany and chandeliers left little room for acting, but Miss Helen Haye, Miss Stella Arbenina, and Mr. Stuart Latham made an admirable best of the very brief moments allotted them. Miss Barbera Bory, hailed by the producers as a "new personality," was clearly ill-fitted to survive in so agitated an environment, and was generally rather the victim than the crest of the waves. The invisible star of the evening was Mr. Leon Davey, who designed the scenery. Palaces, forests, colossal equestrian statues, bandstands complete with real bandsmen and, last but not least, a real puffing train succeeded each other in breathless profusion; until, appropriately enough, the rise of each curtain received more applause than its fall. It appears that *Paprika* does have some sort of a plot. But this doesn't really matter.

The New Curtain at the Old Vic

The new safety curtain at the Old Vic deserves notice not only for its intrinsic merit but for the circumstances of its production. An open competition was held for designs, and the response was enormous. It is the misfortune of the modern painter that he rarely, if ever, has an opportunity of decorating a large surface in a public place. The New Deal in the U.S.A. has offered artists magnificent opportunities of this order. But here the corridors of town-halls, hospitals, schools and similar public buildings remain unutterably dismal, while hundreds of painters are burning to get at something larger than a canvas of three feet by two. The Old Vic competition was won by Mr. Robert Medley; and the judges, Sir Kenneth Clark, Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. C. B. Cochran, deserve our gratitude. For the design is admirably constructed and delightful in colour. Miss Cons and Miss Bayliss are seen on the left, watching a rehearsal, in which figures from tragedy and comedy are seen against a background of scenery and scene-shifters. The ass's head for Bottom plays a witty role in the foreground. The curtain shows the possibility of satisfying the demands both of the expert critic and the unsophisticated playgoer. We cannot help regretting that the Committee unaccountably failed to arrange an exhibition of the other designs submitted; it would have been a most interesting summary of the decorative talent existing in this country. But we should be surprised if there were many designs comparable in excellence and appropriateness to Mr. Medley's.

"Coppélia," at Covent Garden

Coppélia was one of the last fruits of the Second Empire, produced only a few months before the tree fell. Délibes's music, sweet, sparkling and entirely unpretentious, is perfectly suited to ballet, and possesses also the period charm of seventy years ago. It was to these tunes that the ballerinas immortalised in Ludovic Halévy's novels twinkled in tarlatan before the eager opera-glasses of unvenerable greybeards. The Hoffmannesque plot, with its toys and dancing doll, is the ancestor of *Boutique Fantasque* and *Jeux d'Enfants.* The choreography used at Covent Garden has been disinterred from the memory of M. Sergeiff and is the work of Petipa and Cecchetti. The result is an excellent example of what is called Classical Ballet—a taste for which grows with an appreciation of the niceties of dancing. *Coppélia* stands or falls by the dancing of the *prima ballerina,* and at Covent Garden it stands, because Danilova is the dancer. Never has she danced better than in this prodigiously exacting role: her rapidity and her elegance are extraordinary. Panaieff supported her remarkably well, and Semenoff's miming as the sinister Coppelius was highly effective. The *corps de ballet* danced uncertainly yet with verve the spirited czardas. M. Pierre Roy's decor was less inventive and personal than we had expected, but many of the costumes were quite pleasing. Altogether the three acts of this ballet made an exhilarating entertainment, which would have gratified Diaghileff, whose attachment to the classical ballet, throughout his invaluable experiments, remained undiminished.

THE COMING WEEK

SUNDAY, September 25th—
  T. H. Pear on "Vehicles and Routes of Thinking," Conway Hall, 11.
MONDAY, September 26th—
  Vera Brittain and Eric Gill on "Which Way to Peace," Friends' House, 8.
  "Hamlet," in seventeenth-century modes and manners, Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich.
TUESDAY, September 27th—
  Prof. John Hilton on "Man for Man," Conway Hall, 7.
  Edmund Cocksedge on "Seen and Heard in Palestine," Dick Sheppard Centre, 52 Queensway, W.2, 8.
THURSDAY, September 29th—
  H. Wickham Steed and R. W. Seton-Watson on Czechoslovakia: "Facts," Conway Hall, 8.15.
  "An Elephant in Arcady," Kingsway.
  "On Borrowed Time," Haymarket.

re: **CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

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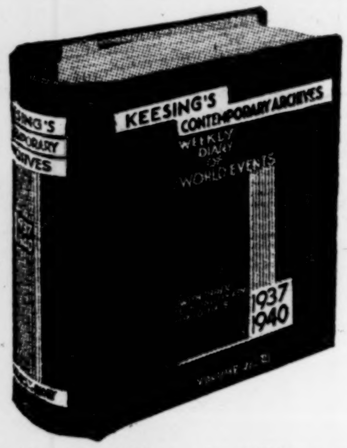

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

MARTIN JOSEPH ROUTH was born in 1755, was elected President of Magdalen at the age of thirty-six, and died in his hundredth year, still President of Magdalen. His most important work was the *Reliquiae Sacrae*, five volumes of texts collected from the more obscure pre-Nicene Fathers.

> It is believed that only one article in the entire collection first saw the light in the President's pages: viz., a fragment of Africanus, about fifty lines long, which he edited from two MSS. at Vienna, and one at Paris. But he also recovered the Greek of a certain fragment of Petrus Alexandrinus from a MS. in the Bodleian—the passage having been hitherto only known in the Latin version of Leontius Byzantinus.

This quotation, which I take from Dean Burgon's *Lives of Twelve Good Men*, may amuse the irreverent, but the *Reliquiae* earned Dr. Routh a European reputation. Moreover, as one who linked the theology of the Nonjurors and the Caroline Divines with that of the Oxford Movement, he is still venerated among High Churchmen, and it is principally for their benefit, no doubt, that a full and scholarly Life now appears—*Dr. Routh*, by R. D. Middleton (Oxford University Press, 12*s*. 6*d*.). The Episcopalian Churches of Scotland and the United States owe a particular debt of piety to his memory, for the sympathetic interest he took in their affairs. But Mr. Middleton's book can be warmly recommended also to those who, though they do not share his Anglican beliefs, find themselves fascinated by the ecclesiastic and academic dignitaries of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

* * *

These prelates and Heads of Houses have come, I think, to possess a certain aesthetic quality from their idiosyncratic characters and habits of thought. Their learning was prodigious, but to a modern eye their ignorance is hardly less extraordinary. The classical Greek and Latin authors, the theologians from Eusebius and Clement to Jansenius and Hoadly, the Old Testament in the Hebrew original, some histories in the English and French vernaculars, and occasionally Dante, Ariosto and even Camoens—such was the continent explored to its smallest by-way by their indefatigable erudition. Stunned by the weight of their learning, the modern reader can bolster himself up by considering the illimitable territories of which they were blissfully unaware. To-day an educated man is expected to have at least a smattering of knowledge in dozens of alarmingly diverse subjects of which the Old Giants were innocent. In his own time a Parr or a Porson might have said: "What I know not is not knowledge." At the Universities there may still survive a few very old men with the profundity and narrowness of the old learning, though the breed must be almost extinct. But whether one welcomes or deplores this change in the furniture of our minds, it is more important than the change in the rapidity of communication; and it has given an air of curious and picturesque remoteness to a man like Dr. Routh, who may conceivably have been seen by someone still alive.

* * *

The anecdotes in Mr. Middleton's book are numerous and delightful. Dr. Routh always wore gown, cassock, bands, and wig. (One of his wigs is still preserved, for after his death it was "fossilized in the petrifying stream at Knaresborough" by Dr. Daubeny, who occupied the joint Chair of Chemistry, Botany and Rural Economy.) Dr. Parr spoke of Routh as "venerable" at the age of forty, and it was remarked that "he had always been old and gave the impression of never having known any other stage of being." Probably the innocent affectation of premature senility has always been popular in the Universities, where seniority enjoys the most agreeable privileges. Routh, moreover, emphasised his diminutive stature by a very bent bearing. He was very deaf, and on occasion condescended to make skilful use of this infirmity. He had a canary which deafened his visitors, and a dog, Romulus, which had had a cat for foster-mother, with the result that it never got its feet wet and washed its face with its paws. His conversational style was august:

> To his servant he would at times exclaim "Bring it back, sirrah." Of the Bishop he would say: "Here comes my Lord of Oxford." Not long before his death his gardener at Tylehurst became insane and had to be sent away. The gardener begged leave to see his master once more and to ask his blessing. The President gladly received him. The man stooped as if to kiss his hand, and in so doing bit a piece out of it. "How did you feel, Mr. President," said Sir George Dasant afterwards, "when the man bit your hand?" "Why, at first, Sir," said Dr. Routh, "I felt considerably alarmed, for I was unaware, sir, what proportion of human virus might have been communicated by the bite; but in the interval of reaching the house, I was convinced that the proportion of virus must have been very small indeed; then I was at rest, but, sir, I had the bite cauterized."

He was comprehensibly opposed to reforms, especially to such as placed Papists and Dissenters on a level with Churchmen. He refused to acknowledge the existence of the railway, he deplored the "Kirk-going" Queen, and on the Sunday after the Duke of Wellington's death, he proposed a toast "To the memory of our great and good Chancellor who never erred except when he was overruled." There is a characteristic story of his benign treatment of a boy who wished to come to Magdalen as Gentleman Commoner.

> Dr. Routh publicly inquired in what book I wished to be examined. I selected the Odyssey, as I had just been reading it. He gave the choice as to the passage on which I should be examined. I chose the First Book as being the easiest. After a few lines had been construed to the President's satisfaction, the examination concluded with the remark of the examiner: "Sir—very well, Sir—that is perfectly sufficient for a Gentleman Commoner at Magdalen."

Almost his last appearance in public, Pusey recollected, was when he was "wheeled out on a fine winter's morning into the High Street to sit beneath the great Tower of the College and watch the young bloods of Christ Church riding out to meet the hounds."

* * *

Dr. Routh married, on his sixty-sixth birthday, a lady aged thirty, who rapidly became infected by her husband's antiquity:

> She was, with her strongly marked features, her abundance of grey hair, and her luxuriant moustache, a striking figure, drawn through the streets of Oxford in a little donkey-chaise attended by a hunch-backed lad named Cox. . . . "Woman," her husband used to proclaim, when from the luncheon-table he saw Cox leading the donkey-carriage round, "Woman, the ass is at the door."

More romantic, it seems, was his attachment to a choir-boy called Lister, remarkable alike for his intellect and his good looks: when he died, aged sixteen, the President wrote a touching Latin epitaph and edited a translation which the lad had made from Bion. There are in this book a number of delightful stories which I should like to quote, such as the Blot in the Bodleian and the Reconverted Russian Princess. Mozley in his *Reminiscences* makes some disobliging statements about Routh which Mr. Middleton shows to be untrustworthy. His own book is a little too hagiographical for my taste and I am far from convinced that the President was as saintly as he is here painted. Thus there is no mention here of Tuckwell's story that the President's death was caused by chagrin at the fall, during the Crimean War, of the Russian securities in which his fortune was invested. He died intestate, as if he thought that Death had forgotten him, and a nephew inherited the money he had destined to charitable and academic purposes. Pious, good-natured, devoted to his College, a passionate collector of books and the object of general veneration, Dr. Routh seems to have enjoyed an uncommonly happy life. He showed signal kindness to Newman, who wrote on the eve of his reception: "You are the only person of station in Oxford who has shown me any countenance in a long course of years." Mr. Middleton's book contains the best of Burgon, and a lot more. Now that we have scholarly recent lives of Routh and Porson, may we not look for an equally enjoyable book on the exuberant, fustigating, truculent, polysyllabic, generous, eccentric and incomparably learned Dr. Parr.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

NEW NOVELS

Doctor Dido. By F. L. LUCAS. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.

Good-for-Nothing. By GABRIEL CHEVALLIER. Translated by MAUD BIGGE. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.

The Monument. By PAMELA HANSFORD JOHNSON. *Chapman and Hall.* 8s. 6d.

Journeyman. By ERSKINE CALDWELL. *Secker and Warburg.* 7s. 6d.

I Lost My Girlish Laughter. By JANE ALLEN. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.

Cambridge at the time of the French Revolution: Mr. Lucas has chosen a good theme, and one well suited to his particular equipment. His novel owes much to his wide knowledge of French and English literature, of history, and of the traditional donnish anecdotes that cluster round a University. The background of *Doctor Dido* is solid, lively and witty. Mr. Lucas draws an amusing contrast between the world-shaking Continental events of the time and the parochial, learned, malicious gossip that occupied (as it always will occupy) a monastic society of scholars. There is plenty of space to fill out this contrast, for the fabric of the story is slight indeed: Dr. Plampin, Reader in Hebrew and Vicar of Babraham, befriends a young French girl who has arrived with a secret letter from her master to Pitt. Events take a turn for the worse in France, and she remains, first as the middle-aged bachelor's housekeeper, then as his mistress. After ten years, of deep happiness on his part and of quiet content on hers, she at last consents to marry him, but first they visit Paris together. Here Sophie meets an old flame and cannot resist the double pull of love and country; she leaves Dr. Plampin, who returns to ten more years of Cambridge solitude. Mr. Lucas treats the relationship of these two with delicacy and subtlety; the friendly, complementary rivalry of French and English mentality has long been a theme dear to his heart. We read on with unflagging interest, hardly expecting to be stirred by any deep emotion; but the futility and loneliness which overwhelm the returned Dr. Pamplin are so touchingly conveyed that we find ourselves at last really concerned for this author of a Gibbonian *Natural History of Enthusiasm* who had been unable to buttress his own heart against the unreasonable tides of passion.

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Doctor Dido is scattered with delightful and often unfamiliar quotations and allusions; for the most part they are germane to the subject, but at times they clog the wheels of the narrative. *Varium et mutabile semper* might well have been spared; so might Shakespeare's second-best bed; and many sentences could with advantage be sifted of their little quips and quirks. For example: "His first cat, Leo, *had lost all nine lives at one fell swoop* by the catapult of a butcher's boy"; why not "had been killed"? There is, too, a touch of sham poetic about the scenic descriptions: elms are "December-naked," Paris "the city of Venus, this modern Paphos where the very air maddened the senses with a ghost of perfume from youth and pleasure pacing by." It is odd that so discriminating a literary critic as Mr. Lucas should pass such flimsy stuff in his own work. But the flaws of his book are all on the surface; *Doctor Dido* is a story of charm and originality, a scholarly, lamplight book which asks to be read aloud by the fire; by a long way the most distinguished of this batch.

Good-for-Nothing is by the author of *Clochemerle*, but it will disappoint admirers of that lively satire, being more a case-history than a novel. The case examined is that of Jean Dartemont, who in consequence of unimaginative and even brutal treatment in his childhood grows into a fundamentally decent but purposeless young man, a rolling stone with a grudge against society balanced by a certain amount of personal conceit. The book opens readably enough with an excellent sketch of the boy's mean provincial family; we recognise the sharp, brisk strokes of the practised novelist. As soon as he runs away, however, the story becomes wholly episodical: he drifts from job to job, from affair to affair, and it is his women and his bosses, not Jean, that we come to know; his war service, though it must have profoundly affected a boy of twenty, is skipped altogether. At last he finds his feet as a Parisian journalist; there had been nothing to suggest that he has any particular talent for the job, and his first success depends on the accident that a murdered woman whose case he is sent out to cover turns out to be a woman who years before had kept him. At this point M. Chevallier seems to feel some inadequacy in the presentation of Jean's character and attempts to mend matters by giving us long extracts from his diary: a desperate expedient which comes too late to succeed.

The Monument does not show an advance on Miss Johnson's last novel *World's End*. It is one of those novels in the Huxleian contrapuntal style, with alternating chapters developing the stories of three groups of people: (1) Mary Captor, sham-highbrow novelist, her Jewish lover, her Jewish lover's father and friends, her Goy lover, and her secretly smut-loving partner in the arty little Hircus Press; (2) Mrs. Sellars, good sort, poor, Labour Party worker, married to a warehouse night-watchman, two children, happy home; and (3) Albert Whye, Cockney worker in a carpet dealer's basement, kind, priggish, tyrannised over by selfish father, devoted to tough, unresponsive younger brother, unhappy home. Out of any one of these Miss Johnson could no doubt have made a satisfactory, even a good, novel; but not out of all three. As far as they go they are good enough (the wealthy Jewish circle and the Whyes are excellent), but just as our interest is thoroughly aroused by one group, we are whisked off to the next. They are barely linked: Mary Captor meets Mrs. Sellars, but only reads in the paper of Albert Whye's murder; Mrs. Sellars, apparently, doesn't even do that. There is not a shadow of unity anywhere; true, the principals are discovered at the top of the Monument, and from time to time that sententious pile protests the author's Higher Intentions by soliloquising in Miss Johnson's poetical vein. I do not like Miss Johnson's poetical vein; here is a sample of it (Mary, not the Monument, *loquitur*):

> Tell me, you loves and cupids, are you so lost, so lost for ever in the moonlit architecture, the shifting bergamasks of ancient days, the pattern of pipe and tabor in the bowers of France, that no young fancy's voice can call you back? I promise you, it shall not last for ever, nor will I stay an unwelcome guest. A moment in your company, a moment of your lutes and laughter swift as a picture beneath closing lids. Surely I have been constant to my open eyes, have watched with a layman's perception the rot of Europe and the raddling of the maps?

Miss Johnson is excellently informed and aware about the world (she has wind already of the rumoured forthcoming anti-Jew drive in Russia), but no amount of awareness and information will by themselves make a good novel.

HAMISH HAMILTON

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Erskine Caldwell is the author of *Tobacco Road,* a dramatised version of which was recently seen at the Gate Theatre, and *Journeyman* is another picture of the sub-human conditions and mentality of a remote community in the Southern States. "A shrewd and brilliant comedy," say the publishers; but if you pause to reflect for an instant you will find it a grim tragedy. Indeed such depths of squalor and stupidity lie almost outside the realm of art altogether; they demand, not a novel, but a blue book. Everybody in this story hovers on the very brink of human reason except one, a travelling preacher named Semon Dye, beside whom Elmer Gantry is as virtuous as a rural Dean. He descends upon the village of Rocky Comfort, announces a revivalist service for Sunday, and in the meantime steals, gambles, drinks, seduces and pimps away everything the villagers possess. Awed by his superior vitality and presence, they scarcely protest; and when he goes they almost regret him: he has, after all, quickened their almost paralysed sense of life. This astonishing story is told with concision and power; and the hysterical climax of the revivalist meeting, with the whole community screaming, quivering and writhing on the floor in half-epileptic, half-sexual effort to "come through" appals and fascinates: Nuremberg, it is evident, has nothing on Rocky Comfort.

I Lost My Girlish Laughter is another Hollywood satire. According to her publishers, "'Jane Allen' is the pseudonym for the personal secretary of one of Hollywood's most high-powered executives," and I can well believe that her story is scarcely an exaggeration. It is immensely readable, and pretty good fun, particularly the inter-office communications and recklessly long, jargon-filled cablegrams, all printed verbatim. The best scene is that in which the Goldwynesque producer, in order to be with his wife during her confinement, moves over, complete with conference staff, to the maternity hospital, only to receive news of the actual birth by telephone from his office boy. The best joke arises from his attempts to get a famous author to do him a last minute rewrite. There are difficulties:

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> Benchley says why not try Dorothy Parker?
> Parker says why not try God?

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tells how England cast away her leadership of the Grand Alliance; how a "peace at any cost" Ministry was installed; how by this very fact the French were incited to continue their resistance, although in 1709 the tyrant of Europe had become a suppliant, and how they soon became the dominant power. Marlborough was hunted into exile. A peace was made contrary to every canon of good faith. All Europe was staggered by the perfidy of the Tory Ministers.

DESMOND MACCARTHY in *Sunday Times*: "There is no doubt that *Marlborough* must be placed in the front rank of military and political biography. . . . It has an educative value for anyone who purposes to take a hand in national affairs, or may some day find himself in a position of public responsibility."

Book Society Recommendation. 25/- net
Published by Harrap

JANE AUSTEN: A BIOGRAPHY

Jane Austen. By ELIZABETH JENKINS. *Gollancz.* 15*s*.

An interesting essay might be written around the relationship of author and reader, as it is revealed by our treatment of authors' names. For famous authors in civilised society occupy rather the same position as illustrious and semi-mythical ancestors in the world of the tribe, and exercise the same ghostly pervasive influence. In every society the great dead must be propitiated; and, just as some ancestors are more formidable than others, some are passively benevolent, some engaging buffoons, so for certain writers we reserve special tricks of nomenclature and when we speak of them indicate our attitude by a change of voice. Thus, Dr. Johnson is seldom mentioned without his title; Lord Chesterfield obstinately remains the nobleman; but Flaubert is rarely allowed a Christian name and even after death is still the impersonal and devoted artist. Towards Lamb, a particularly harmless spirit, his admirers' approach is one of affectionate, almost mocking, familiarity—they seem to regret that he possesses a surname at all: how cosy if he had contented himself with "Charles" or "Elia"! Jane Austen's effect on posterity is even more curious. She is *Miss* Austen—with an intonation respectful yet fond.

Under the fondness, perhaps, we are a little afraid of her. It is an unnerving thought (as Mary Mitford remarks in one of her letters) that this at first somewhat flighty and dashing and, at a later stage, prim and reserved young woman, who sat through dull parties with such perfect good grace, should all the time have been accumulating notes and "impressions," secretly sharpening her wits at the expense of society. A stiletto is discovered in a shagreen needle-case! And yet, though the point of the weapon is extremely fine, there is nothing indecorous or brutal in her manner of wielding it—no anxiety to hurt for hurting's sake; and, if she stabs deep, it is with an almost deprecatory gentleness. A single quick phrase or a flash of dialogue; and her hands have returned to her lap or are quietly cross-stitching. . . .

Simplicity and subtlety meet in Jane Austen's method: innocence and experience took equal shares in forming her mind. Her private life was brief and uneventful; and Miss Jenkins, in a biography that runs to some three hundred and fifty large and closely printed pages, is obliged to devote far more space to a discussion of the fictitious characters her heroine created than to a description of the life she actually led; for "real life" by comparison seems dim and shadowy. No love affairs, no struggles, no lasting passions. Yet it is not necessary to have experienced to understand; and Jane Austen, being a child of the eighteenth century, took for granted, though no doubt she preferred to ignore, aspects of life she had never examined at close range or might have declined to examine had an opportunity ever presented itself. Yes, she was innocent; but she was certainly not ingenuous. Charlotte Brontë complained that she was both knowing and ladylike; and it would be hard to find two more oddly contrasted figures than the daughters of Steventon Rectory and Haworth Parsonage. Jane Austen's genius has the charm of Regency architecture, its decorum, its sophistication, its grave good breeding. It stands at the intersection of contrasted periods and surveys the nineteenth century across a gulf that is profound yet narrow.

Her life, on the whole, was an uncommonly happy one. She may have been conscious that there were enjoyments that had passed her by; but there is no suggestion in her work of incompleteness, no hint of frustration or emotional strain. The atmosphere is calm; the light is concentrated. Jane Austen is never at a loss among her characters; nor does she (as did Charlotte and Emily Brontë) allow any single character to set up a dictatorship and annex the narrative. Yet, though she was the most deliberate of literary artists, it is doubtful whether she would have appreciated or begun to comprehend half the eulogies that have been showered on her head during the last eighty years. For her chief personal characteristic was her unblushing, unaffected modesty. She delighted in her work; she enjoyed her success; yet, at a period when her success was firmly established, she could still write to a nephew who had just left school in a manner that put their efforts on to an equal footing:

> By the by, my dear Edward [she observed in a celebrated letter], I am quite concerned for the loss your mother mentions . . . two chapters and a half to be missing is monstrous! It is as well that *I* have not been at Steventon lately, and therefore cannot be suspected of purloining them. . . . I do not think, however, that any theft of that sort would be really very useful to me. What should I do with your strong, manly, spirited sketches, full of variety and glow?

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M & C

> How could I possibly join them on to the little bit (two inches wide) of ivory on which I work with so fine a brush, as produced little effect after much labour?

Miss Jenkins' book, though sympathetic, is slightly diffuse and not always very well written; but her judgments are shrewd, her manner is pleasant, and her portraiture neat. She manages to show—and this, I think, is the biography's greatest merit—that a life may be apparently uneventful yet packed with absorbing occupation, intellectual and emotional, from childhood to middle age. It was in the domestic calm of Steventon and Southampton and Bath, amid the concerns of a large and devoted family, that the novelist acquired that capacity for acute analysis from which she developed her extraordinary gift of describing the motives and dispositions, the major passions and minor weaknesses, of her fellow human beings. She does it now boldly and directly, as in the opening chapters of *Pride and Prejudice*, but more often with a multiplicity of delicate strokes. Characters develop as we watch them in an Austen novel. Weaknesses are lightly indicated before they are underlined. A catastrophe is preceded by the faintest of shadows. Thus the young man, whose insincerity and frivolity are afterwards exposed at considerable length, is first given away by the revelation that he has driven up to London for the sole purpose of visiting his barber; and we realise that all is not right with Willoughby and Marianne when we learn that they have called on an elderly relative, from whom Willoughby expects to inherit her house and fortune, and have examined and appraised the furniture while she lies ill in bed!

Family life is a wonderful source of literary impressions. Its fascination (said George Moore) was its intensity; and understanding her family as well as she did—from her sister, Cassandra, whom she adored, to the lackadaisical brother of whom she lamented that since he had been in the house he had done nothing but roam up and down stairs, bang doors and ring the bell for a glass of water—she found no difficulty in transferring her science to the world at large. She possessed (to borrow Miss Jenkins' handy phrase) a knack of rendering "that infinite variety comprehended in the normal"; and there is no feeling in her work of smallness or stuffiness—the scene is tiny, but it is redeemed by its perfect proportions and by the easy, luminous treatment of every episode. She did not pause to consider whether a subject was worthy of her. She did not hesitate to expend her skill on the apparently trivial. She knew that any subject is worthy of an artist if it stirs his mind. . . .

Had Miss Jenkins' biography no other value, it would still deserve reading because it sends us back to Jane Austen's novels, rouses the memory and whets the appetite. Miss Jenkins' picture of the Austen family is amusing and vivid. She has worked hard to collect every detail that could throw light on the novelist's personal background; but it is preposterous that a book of this size should contain neither index nor descriptive chapter headings—with the result that the reader in search of some particular reference or quotation may waste half an hour before he can locate the passage he needs. Incidentally, the proof-correction has been slipshod. There is an annoying misprint in the date on page 22 and another in the lines quoted from Wordsworth on page 178.

PETER QUENNELL

THE LIFE OF THE WEST INDIES

Waters of the West. By KENNETH PRINGLE. Foreword by the RT. HON. LORD OLIVIER. *Allen and Unwin.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Pringle's descriptions lead us through tangles and thickets of words which sometimes produce a feeling that we have ourselves been hacking our way through the forests and over the mountains of the West Indies and Central America. But the effort is rewarding. Wherever he has travelled the author has set himself to live with or as near as possible to what he would call the proletariat, entering with real sympathy into their interests and learning much that must remain hidden from most travellers or even residents, and certainly from Royal Commissions. He belongs indeed to a school which positively prides itself on being in tune with the primitive—as essential "life."

Very well buried in the jam of "travel" writing (which cannot fail to "appeal" by its stress on the attractive physique and the sexual freedom of the islanders) the book contains a valuable and important analysis of political and social conditions in Jamaica, where Mr. Pringle has had three or four years of schoolmastering. It is true that his approach inhibits a full view of the effects of poverty and disease, or of such things as widespread malnutrition among the children. Here his constant dwelling on the good looks and healthy appetites of the people is definitely misleading. He seems aware enough of social distress in his political pages, but his references there (for example, to the late Report on Nutrition) are swamped by his enthusiasm for the everyday life that is. If he is aware at all of the point of view of the women, who now have almost sole responsibility for the support of the majority of the children, he seems to think of it only as a feeble protest against male vitality.

Mr. Pringle's insight, however, is fresh and thoroughly sound in the politico-economic field. The century of Emancipation, he says justly, has created a *bourgeoisie*, while leaving the "peasant" masses much as they were. With refreshing if youthful thoroughness he demolishes the fantasy that Jamaica can ever come to maturity as a purely "small peasant" society, and with his eye for a future Socialist world order he cuts straight through to the solution of collective farming. Whatever complexities of the present may stand in the way of this specific, the new Royal Commission will be well advised to be wary of the common local clamour for "land settlement." Allotment gardens—the present "Settlement" schemes are no more—will solve nothing, and the mood of the people is one of expectant readiness for bold experiments on new lines. Mr. Pringle is at his best in his clear vision that, in spite of the almost incurably conventional middle-class outlook of many West Indian politicians today, salvation can now only come from within West Indian society, and that the abounding vitality he describes is already working towards a drawing together of all classes. The book is a timely reminder that the constitution of the Crown Colony, now "the pride of the orphanage," has never yet been, as so long supposed, an active training for full self-government.

The extreme depression that took hold of the author in Guatemala and other parts of the mainland is interesting in contrast to his determined pleasure in Jamaica, and in a slightly less degree in Haiti. It is evidence perhaps that the atmosphere of freedom in the British West Indies is not quite unreal—though Mr. Pringle himself would have it wholly the creation of the Negro "whose great virtue is resistance against evil—against disease, against poverty, against fear, against despair, against indifference, against grief."

W. M. MACMILLAN

THE MOZART LETTERS

Letters of Mozart and His Family, Vols. I and II. By EMILY ANDERSON. *Macmillan.* 18s. each.

This monumental edition of the Mozart family letters has been in preparation for a number of years by Miss Emily Anderson, who has translated and edited the letters of Mozart, of his mother and of his father, Leopold, and has had the assistance of Mr. C. B. Oldman in translating and editing extracts from the letters of Mozart's wife, Constanze. It is a complete edition as regards Mozart's own letters, containing all those that are extant, including a certain number of letters or portions of letters which have not been published before, not even in the standard German edition of Professor Ludwig Schiedermair—the four volumes of which were first published in 1914. It may be said, therefore, that the present edition of the Mozart family letters is by far the most complete and authoritative that exists in any language. Also, it is the only translation which gives the unexpurgated text of his famous letters to his Augsburg cousin. The method of treatment which Miss Anderson has practised may be best set forth in her own words:

> . . . it has been the editor's aim to reproduce these [the letters] as faithfully as possible. Several letters, however, contained rhymed passages, either written out as verse or concealed in prose, which, if the rhyming is to be retained and the full flavour of the original preserved, defy a literal translation. Here some sort of compromise was inevitable. Again, Mozart, who was a very spontaneous letter-writer and nearly always wrote in a great hurry, frequently indulges in colloquialisms and slang which the Editor, while avoiding passing fashions of speech of the present day, has endeavoured to render into the equivalent English phraseology. Mozart's extreme liveliness and haste are reflected too in his punctuation. Very often whole letters are a series of sentences strung together by dashes. As a slavish adherence in this respect to the originals would have produced pages wearisome to the eye of the reader the letters have been punctuated more normally and the dashes retained only when the sense demands it. The same remark applies to Mozart's lavish use of brackets, which in many cases have been replaced by commas.

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There is still a possibility of further letters of Mozart's turning up. The great majority of the letters we possess date from before his marriage in 1782, when he was 26 years old. The fact that these first two volumes of Miss Anderson's edition only take one to the beginning of 1781, leaving the third volume—still to come—to cover the remaining 10 years of his life—shows how greatly Mozart's letter-writing fell off in his later years.

Many valuable letters are known to have been lost, including a number of letters to his wife from Berlin in 1789. Letters written to Frau Duschek have been lost and also what Constanze Mozart described as "two interesting letters to Frau von Trattner about music." When we remember that it was to his pupil, Frau von Trattner, that Mozart dedicated his C minor Fantasia and Sonata (K 475 and K 457) we may imagine what we have lost in these letters about music. All who have read Mozart's letters, especially those, like myself, who have made translations of many of them—will agree with Miss Anderson as to their slanginess, spontaneity, wit, gaiety, profound poignancy and humanity. But Miss Anderson makes two interesting observations which I do not seem to have seen before. The first is that with few exceptions Mozart's letters are addressed to members of his own family and that apparently he never wrote to any composer or musician apart from the letter of dedication he sent to Haydn with his six quartets.

These two facts are certainly rather remarkable. Admitting that some letters, other than those we know of, may have been lost, yet the total absence of any correspondence with colleagues is additional evidence of the artistic isolation in which Mozart lived. This may partly account for his ever-increasing poverty and lack of worldly success. Another characteristic which his letters reveal is the extraordinary speed of Mozart's mind. Some of his letters make the reader dizzy with their swiftness of thought as he jumps from one thing to another. It is a merit of Miss Anderson's translations that she preserves instead of smoothing out all the punning, the play on words, alliteration, letter-twisting, upside-down spelling, date-juggling, etc., in which Mozart indulges. If we look at the original manuscript of his letters this vitality and swiftness are even more impressive for, as Miss Anderson says:

> When we take up one of Mozart's autograph letters, many of which are untidily written, larded with erasures and splashed with ink-blots, and suddenly find him weaving delicate scrolls and fantastic flourishes round a capital we remember certain themes upon which he has embroidered a wealth of variations deliciously interlaced and flawless in texture.

Miss Vernon Lee was the first to point out that Wagner had an unusually slow pulse and to connect this fact with the character of his music. Whether there is any connection between the pulse rate and swiftness of mind or not, Mozart's letters, like his music, show a supernormal quickness of mind. In a letter to his father dated February 22nd, 1778, he writes:

> You will forgive me, I hope, if in my eagerness I sometimes get excited—if that is the expression I should use, though indeed I would much rather say, if I sometimes write naturally. I have much to say on this subject but I cannot; for I find it impossible to do so. Among my many faults I have also this one, a persistent belief that my friends who know me, really do know me. Therefore many words are not necessary: for if they do not know me, oh, then where could I ever find words enough? It is bad enough that one needs words at all—and letters into the bargain.

An invaluable feature of the present edition is the chronological arrangement of all the letters so that the correspondence provides a month by month account of Mozart's life. There is no parallel in the history of any man of genius to the letters exchanged between father and son during Mozart's tour through Germany to Paris in the years 1777–1779, which are contained in the second volume. It is a unique story of the clash of two different temperaments. The accounts given in most biographies of this correspondence make a pale and insipid version compared with the original letters. These are indispensable to anyone who wishes to see Mozart at first hand.

W. J. TURNER

FADE OUT

Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher. Vol. IV, 1916–1930. Edited by OLIVER VISCOUNT ESHER. *Nicholson and Watson.* 25*s.*

This final volume of the Esher Papers is notably less interesting and important than its predecessors. Lord Esher was sixty-two when the war broke out, and during the next three years his principal occupation was trying to placate the mutual distrusts, jealousies and hatreds of our military leaders. Kitchener, French, Haig, Robertson and Sir Henry Wilson were parts of the machine which were continually seizing, and Esher was indefatigable in lubricating them with flattery. Relations between the soldiers and the politicians were hardly less choppy than those between one general and another; the strain to which they all were being submitted must be remembered, but History has painfully refuted Esher's encomium upon "The genuine efforts of all prominent men to do their best, without regard to consequences." The spectacle of old men squabbling while young men died obviously had a devastating effect upon his spirits:

> You have no idea how I hate and detest it. No "glorious panoply of war" for me. It does not exist. I admit that the marvellous qualities it brings out in the men actually at the front are stimulating, but everything behind the front is odious to me.

Rather surprisingly he seems to have retained his faith in Haig and Robertson: he was a bigoted "Westerner," and never perceived that the despised politicians showed far more understanding of strategical principles than the professional soldiers.

Before the war ended, his public activities rapidly diminished. The reason for this is not made clear: no doubt he lacked the influence with Lloyd George which he had enjoyed with Mr. Asquith and Balfour; but had something happened to alienate from the King his old and confidential adviser? The editor of the Papers, no doubt for very good reasons, leaves the matter obscure. There are letters to Queen Mary about the history of Buckingham Palace and to the King congratulating him upon the Victory, but the Power behind the Throne appears to have been supplanted. There is an interesting letter to Lord Stamfordham about the murder of the Russian Royal Family:

> You ask me what does it mean that the country has shown such callous indifference to the Russian tragedy. The answer lies in the ignorance of the masses and the moral cowardice of the few. . . . The imprisonment of a man like Bertrand Russell for some foolish words about the Americans reacts upon such magnates as the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, who simply dare not speak a word of sympathy, still less a phrase of disgust, when they see the vile calumnies against the Emperor Nicholas and the Empress followed up by the cruel murder of one and perhaps both

A world that was watching millions of innocent men being massacred could hardly be expected to be specially appalled by the obliteration of one family; but it was courageous of Esher, in a letter intended for the King's eyes, to speak in the same sentence of his cousins' deaths and of Bertrand Russell's imprisonment.

He was always anxious for the Government to have ready a plan for the Peace: he was indignant that the French and Balfour turned down the Austrian Emperor's Peace offer in March, 1917, and, though at one moment he prophesied revolution as a result of an inconclusive peace, he sympathised with the Lansdowne letter. "War can only be made with passion—peace can only be made without it." And in June, 1919, he writes: "The Paris Conference has at any rate succeeded in this, that a future war upon an even bigger scale becomes inevitable." Five months later he comments upon our support of the White Russians:

> What a black chapter in our history is all this Russian business! And we have the experience of the French Revolution behind us. In 1793 we went to war against the French Bolshevists because they cut off Louis the Sixteenth's head.
>
> The war lasted twenty-one years and we restored the Bourbons. Where are they now? And the principle of the French Revolution minus its trimmings of atrocities spread over the civilised world! Probably this is precisely what will happen to the principles of Lenin and Co.

There is nothing very sensational in this volume. Perhaps the most interesting revelation is that the King wished on personal grounds to refuse to accept Lord Northcliffe in the Cabinet: "I venture to think," Esher wrote, when consulted, to Lord Stamfordham, "that the King would have had the warm sympathy and approval of the vast majority of his subjects if he had made a stand against the principle of admitting to the Government, and especially to the Secretaryships of State, a newspaper proprietor." There is also an edifying glimpse of a Cabinet meeting in April, 1916, on the subject of conscription:

> After a long debate, at half-past two, the Prime Minister said to the Cabinet: "Please remember that in an hour's time I have to tell the House of Commons what the Cabinet have decided." There was a silence for a minute or two, and then A. J. B. said: "You had better tell them that the Cabinet have decided it is quite incapable of conducting the business of the country and of carrying on the war." No one having made any observation upon this, the Prime Minister asked:

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TALENT AND TAKING PAINS

Journal, 1928-1934. By JULIAN GREEN. *Plon.* 18 *frs.*

There can be no more irritating plight for an author than to be always on the lips of apologetic admirers. One of these equivocal names pops up in conversation. Julian Green. Good, rather good, interesting, a little dim? A new book of his appears; we welcome it, but with folded arms. One critic thinks it better than his last book, another that it somehow just misses; and that's the extent of our enthusiasm. Even total neglect must have advantages over a recognition accompanied by shrugs and half-sympathies. I have met this attitude towards M. Green so often, both in myself and others, that its peculiar meanness has ended by disturbing me. True, he has backers—M. Edmond Jaloux in France, Mr. Edward Sackville West here—but their praise has been exceptional. Most of us have agreed (without properly reading him) to almost-like his work. Why? Obviously he possesses twice the talent of a William Faulkner or a Charles Morgan, both of whom get thundering notices. He is not, like so many of the successful, an inferior writer pretending to greatness, but a good minor novelist struggling hard to become very good. (Among minor novelists, by the bye, I may say that I should include such masters as Jules Renard and Stevenson.) He carries the germ of self-improvement. Awkward—yes, it rules out the possibility of an easy hit; his work changes and grows. And only an infinitesimal section of his public is capable of growing up with him. Readers who look solely for entertainment in a novelist are likely to dismiss him impatiently; he chooses gloomy themes, he is not always completely master of them, his realities are just too far from common experience and just not striking enough to penetrate an insensitive mind. For so persevering and lonely a talent critics at least might be expected to show some sympathy. In England, unfortunately, they have shown little.

Some of the reasons for this lack of understanding are quite superficial. M. Green happens to bear an American name and to write in French; and the circumstance has given him the reputation of an amateur. Nothing could be further from the truth; he is in fact, in upbringing and outlook, as French as Sisley. Compared with any English writer of similar talent, he is rigidly professional. He works harder, he digs deeper into himself, he achieves more. The French tradition helps such a writer enormously. It gives him two strings to his bow, for besides what he writes in public—his novels, poetry or whatever it may be—he undertakes also the task of documenting himself. Throughout his life the comparison between his published works and his private journal will be before him as a touchstone of sincerity. What a gap, to start with, between the two, how many heartrending contradictions! Every writer begins by being two men, who walk on opposite sides of the road, and it is only by the unremitting exercise of talent that the two can be made to meet. The conflict is plain in the *journal intime* of almost any conscientious novelist (I am not speaking now of the genius who immediately finds himself); it is plain in this *Journal* 1928-1934 of Julian Green's. I notice the following passage:

> Très préoccupé par mon roman. Il existe une vérité à laquelle il faut atteindre à tout prix, celle qui est au coeur "de tout homme venant en ce monde." Ce n'est pas une vérité de roman, ce n'est pas cet air de vraisemblance qui fait crier d'admiration les amateurs. Non, pour trouver le vérité, il faut travailler contre soi-même, contre sa pente, contre les facilités que donne l'habitude, contre le succès, contre le public; il faut supprimer toutes les pages où l'amusement du lecteur est le seul objet en vue. Les mots forment une sorte de courant qu'il faut sans cesse remonter; qui cède à leur entrainement va droit à l'échec, car il devient impossible, après avoir longtemps abusé les mots, de leur faire dire le vérité.

That expresses admirably one of the chief realities of a writer's life, which the French are more capable of facing than we. I have met few English novelists who were not complacent or fundamentally afraid of themselves. Arnold Bennett scared of his own timidity! A stammer accompanied his pomp; when he posed for a photograph the effect of that cockatoo head would be spoilt by a rucked trouser-leg of which he was unaware. And what level of self-knowledge do we find in his journals? "Bought socks in Bond Street, dined at Savoy, this year written 1,000,000 words."

Not that Green is self-obsessed. But he takes himself seriously as a writer. His Journal, indeed, reveals a fastidious, amused, melancholy and somewhat fearful observer of what is going on around him, in his home, in the street, in international affairs. So few books of distinction have appeared during the last few months in France that I recommend Green's to everyone who is interested in literature. He does not set out to dazzle; his visits to the theatre and the Louvre, his conversation with other writers, views of landscape and street snapshots, reflect a sunk personality and not an ego on show. The opening paragraph for the year 1929 gives the tone of his self-portrait:

> "Il est riche. Comment le trouves-tu? Pas très bien, évidemment. Il était mieux autrefois. Qu'est-ce que tu veux, il épaissit, il reste assis toute la journée à écrir ses livres, alors il devient énorme. . . ." De qui s'agit-il? De moi. Je suis au café. Un ancien camerade de lycée vient de me serrer le main, me tape de cent francs et va en suite rejoindre un ami, à l'autre bout de la salle. Il croit chuchoter très bas; en réalité, il crie comme crierait un enroué. Enfin, me dis-je, enfin une opinion sincère. Et j'écoute ces précieuses paroles.

The six years of his diary record the quiet life of a man of some fifty years: a life dedicated, Goncourt-wise, to literature. With difficulty he manages his twenty or thirty lines a day. Those who know his novels will recognise the rainy days, winter landscape and fears going back to childhood which are the centre of his work. He began, as a novelist, by letting his imagination twist into violent shapes—a fault not uncommon with the ultra-sensitive, and to some extent cut himself off from what he was writing. His later work—*Le Visionnaire,* the somnambulistic and lovely *Minuit*—shows a far deeper originality. At sixty he might very well produce a masterpiece. The change unfortunately occurred after the period of this journal, and we have to guess at what has happened to him since. But that is the only sense in which the present book could be called disappointing. It makes an admirable introduction to a writer who has worked tirelessly to create his talent (not all are born with it), and whose reward has been chiefly nods of damp approval.

G. W. STONIER

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates, and all information on page 465

merely illustrations of the author's honest ingenuousness. Even to a prejudiced mind the book seems free of indecency. It should prove a very useful textbook for doctors to hand to young men and women who are confronted with the kind of difficulties with which the book deals. These things are not always easy to explain by word of mouth. Dr. Hirsch contributes a foreword, and Mr. Havelock Ellis is said to have given the author assistance. The volume is "affectionately dedicated" to Mr. Kenneth Walker, a surgeon with exceptional experience and authority in abnormalities of sex.

About Motoring

BODY - CUM - CHASSIS

THIRTY years ago every aristocratic motorist ordered the chassis of his new motor car from a selected factory and then visited a coachbuilder in Long Acre or at one of the half-dozen famous provincial establishments, where in prolonged conference a "body" was chosen for delivery perhaps three months later, at a price often quite as high as that of the chassis. To-day an increasing number of the smaller and cheaper family saloons are one-piece jobs, for the all-steel body is also the chassis. The fundamental structure is simply a metal box of irregular shape, with a trussed and braced tray protruding at its forward end. The engine is dropped into this tray; axles, wheels, propeller-shaft, gear box, and all other mechanical components are pushed into position from beneath, and secured by their appropriate fastenings. In the old days a major overhaul commenced with attaching the body by slings to overhaul tackle and lifting it off the chassis; to-day a similar job is approached by jacking up the "body" and dropping the various components from beneath it on to the floor. The pros and cons of the method deserve consideration by those who may still choose whether they prefer the "metal box" or the separate "body" and "chassis" method of construction.

The engineers who adopt the "metal box" system make three principal claims on its behalf, all of which are true. First, it is very strong. The roof binds it into a steel cube, whereas the older type of body was little more than an open tray, carrying light top hamper on light vertical pillars. Secondly, because the "box" construction makes for strength, it is possible to reduce the weight of a car built in this fashion; and when the weight is reduced, the power-to-weight ratio can be increased, the fuel consumption lowered, and the speed and climb improved. A roomy 10 h.p. saloon of this pattern will average 40 miles to a gallon of petrol, comfortably exceed 60 m.p.h., and climb main road hills under full load on top gear at 40 m.p.h. These figures were quite impossible two or three years ago. Thirdly, the construction protects the owner against personal injury and against a host of irritating petty troubles. Nothing but a frightful collision can flatten out these steel cubes. In an ordinary crash of the tolerably heavy type the occupants will suffer from shock—that is inevitable. Safety glass should protect them against cuts. The braced steel container will guard them against crushing. The driver may, as always, sustain serious abdominal injuries through impact with his steering wheel, but the remaining passengers will normally emerge with relatively minor damage. Some insurance companies actually quote slightly lower premiums for cars of this pattern, knowing that the risk of personal injury is less than with certain alternative methods of construction. Apart from this gruesome aspect, the metal box unquestionably relieves the owner of many trivial inconveniences. There are no body bolts to be tightened up periodically, for the body and chassis form a single unit, composed of steel pressings electrically welded into a solid mass. Nothing can "work," and if the design is sufficiently sound to eliminate actual deformation of the complicated shell, the doors will remain both taut and free for an indefinite period. Squeaks and rattles will be far less likely to occur than with separate units. These assets—strength, lightness, economy of use, safety, reliability, and enhanced performance—are substantial, impressive, and genuine enough. To them yet another may be added about which the engineers are silent in public, though it possibly weighs with them in secret more than any other. This method of construction is cheap. It is applied to the 1939 Morris and Vauxhall tens, which represent unparalleled value for money at their respective prices of £175 and £168. It is, of course, only cheap if an enormous output can be sold. The various steel pressings are stamped out by giant dies, fit together like the fragments of a jig-saw, and are swiftly welded into unity by electricity. No simpler or swifter method of assembling the main structure of a motor car is conceivable. But the cost of the dies is extremely heavy, and must be spread over a very large number of chassis if profit is to be earned by selling so complex and luxurious a vehicle at £168. (If an individual die costs £10,000, it must be charged against an output of 10,000 chassis at £1 per car; but against an output of 500,000 chassis at a few pence per car.) The designer must therefore gamble on the extent of his possible sales; but if he succeeds in disposing of the calculated output, his profit is proportionate.

Turning now to the user's point of view, he necessarily relishes the practical road aspects of the method—the liveliness which is born of low weight and the amazing fuel economy. But above all, he will usually appreciate the maintained silence of the vehicle. The old-fashioned type of car with a separate body of hybrid construction—wood framing, metal panels, mortised joints, and the like—had a horrible trick of generating body noises after a few thousand miles. These were always difficult for an amateur to track to their respective lairs. A few years ago I used to get a friend to jump heavily on the running boards, whilst I applied an ear to various portions of the car; or I used to coast the car with its engine stopped down long easy gradients whilst an enthusiastic assistant clambered all over it, and laid his ear against suspected components. If by such methods an irritating squeak, rattle or grind was eventually traced home, it might or might not be possible to cure it. With the steel box such annoyances are normally non-existent. I have encountered cars of this type which "drummed." Some panel or other element of the welded cube proved sympathetic to a particular engine vibration. But the modern factory laboratory usually succeeds in eliminating such faults, and their existence need hardly be apprehended in 1939. So there is probably only one snag which the intending buyer need bear in mind, and I cannot regard it as serious. Sometimes in their enthusiasm for cheap assembly on a conveyor track designers forget the vital aspect of accessibility for repair. I well remember a friend who bought a car of that kidney some years ago. The dynamo burnt out in the first week. He received a free dynamo under the terms of his guarantee; but the rear axle had to be cast loose before the free dynamo could be installed. Actually, the metal cube assists accessibility; for the designer must remember throughout that everything must be reached

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SUSSEX, Wood's Mill, Henfield. 'Phone: 93. Charming house, grounds, cuisine, comfort, fishing, riding, car.

EASTBOURNE, "Mona" House, Compton St. Small comfortable private hotel, two mins. sea, Devonshire Park. Mod. inclusive terms. 'Phone: 2597. Matthews.

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ACHILL ISLAND. Slievemore Hotel. Largest and oldest established. Close to sea. A.A. and R.I.A.C. appointments. Apply Hope Clapham.

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WINTER IN SUNNY SALTDEAN, BRIGHTON! 4 comfortably furnished, detached, brick Bungalows, close sea. Main drainage, concrete roads, radio, electric fires (½*d.* unit). 25*s.* incl. Owner, 25 Church Crescent, N.20. Enterprise 2628.

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CONTINENTAL TRIPS VIA HOLLAND. From 15*s.* a day inclusive from London. Realise your ambition now. Trips operate until end November. Parties special terms. Particulars from M. Terwindt, passenger-agent, Heerengracht 224, AMSTERDAM.

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HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS

Special cheap rates are available for "Holiday Suggestions" advertisements on this page—on application. Other rates and full particulars regarding Classified Advertisements will be found on page 465.

HOUSES, FLATS, PROPERTY, etc.
For Sale, To Let and Wanted

FOR SALE. Charming small house, Cornish coast. Radiators, h. and c. bedrooms. Exchange house within 50 miles London considered. Box 2802.

IRISH cottage farmhouse to let or sell; 600 feet above Belfast Lough. Remote. Sanitation. Hot water. Garage. Few acres available. Cheap. Box 2884.

NEAR Arundel. Charming sixteenth-century cottage to let, furnished, October to March. Four large rooms, bathroom, w.c. Garden. Telephone. Glorious surroundings; 30*s.* week. Mansel, 94 Ebury Street, S.W.1.

CHARMING house, 4 bedrooms, very large, detached garage, room over. Corner acre, unspoilable position. Let or sell. Adcock, Gt. Missenden. Tel. 289.

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SEAFORD. Modern detached furnished house, overlooking Downs, Links, to let October–March, 2½ *guineas* weekly. Two reception, cloak room, 3 bedrooms (5 beds), bathroom. All services, Ideal boiler, garage, garden. Box 2866.

OLD-WORLD fisherman's cottage. 4 rooms, electricity, water. Artistically furnished. Opposite beach. Shops, P.O., etc. Sept.–Oct., 3 guineas. Long let special terms. Write (Miss) O. Stenson-Stenson, Port Isaac, N. Cornwall.

OLD COULSDON. 530ft. up, near open country. Modern, oak block floors, 4 bedrooms (3 dble., 4th, 12ft. × 8ft.), 2 recep. (lounge 18ft. × 12ft.), garage space, £1,050. "Crestleigh," Placehouse Lane.

NOW that Czechoslovakia has been safely sold, why not enjoy a dishonourable peace by buying or renting an amusingly decorated Regency house with garden, among old houses and trees, facing the loveliest reach of river, 8 miles West End? £1,950 or £130. Box 2899.

PARLIAMENT HILL FIELDS. Only 15–20 minutes West End or City. Charming SELF-CONTAINED FIRST FLOOR FLAT, 3 rooms, bathroom and kitchenette. Rent £94 p.a. exc. Managing Agents: Scott, Ford & Co., 40 Camden Road, N.W.1. Gul. 3324/6.

TWO Service Flats to let on September Quarter day at £104, £155 p.a. respectively, overlooking gardens. Both include dressing room (with wash hand-basin), bathroom, etc., and comprehensive service, including bed-making, shoe-cleaning, window-cleaning, etc., etc. Further details from Secretary, Isokon (Lawn Road) Flats, N.W.3. Primrose 6054.

ONE Service flat to let. Tenant going abroad and could give immediate possession. Rent, £104, includes full domestic service (cleaning, bed-making, shoe-cleaning, window cleaning, service of housekeeper, maids and porters, central heating, etc.). Excellent food at very moderate prices. Full particulars from Isokon (Lawn Road) Ltd., N.W.3.

HIGHGATE VILLAGE, 3 North Grove. Mountview 1096. Furnished service rooms from 35*s.* 'Phone and bathroom each floor. Large garden. Garage. Meals as required.

COTTAGE wanted, to rent or purchase, within next few months, suitable for permanent residence, reasonable distance London, outskirts country town preferred, garden, electricity, garage Box 2874.

WANTED, Jan. to June, 1939, fully furnished country cottage, modern sanitation, 10 miles north of Leeds. Box 2801.

MISCELLANEOUS

HEATH BADMINTON CLUB. Bickersteth Hall Christchurch Rd., Hampstead. 2–5 p.m. Saturdays. Apply to: Miss Raikes, 8 Gainsborough Gardens, Hampstead, before October 1st.

HAVE your favourite suit copied exactly in a "John Peel" Cumberland Tweed, £4 17*s.* 6*d.* Fit guaranteed or money refunded. Patterns and particulars post free. Redmayne, Ltd., 10 Wigton, Cumberland.

NEW CARPET MATERIAL

handwoven of pure goat's wool and flax, is reversible, durable and a really cheap price. Send for samples to sole importer, Gerald Holtom, furnishing agent, 259B Tottenham Court Road, W.1. Museum 5119.

BARGAIN YEAR FOR WINTER UNDERWEAR!—Thrifty Buyers! Send for Illus. Catalogue and Free Patterns of lovely "B-P" Underwear. See the BIG REDUCTIONS on last year's prices. Handle patterns, and judge the EXTRA SAVING, quality for quality, through buying DIRECT FROM MAKERS. Pure Wool, Mixtures, Art Silk. Every style and size, for Women, Children, Men. Special OUTSIZE Service. Satisfaction GUARANTEED. Write to Birkett & Phillips Ltd. (Dept. N.S.), Union Road, Nottingham.

ATHEENIC Scotch Woven UNDERWEAR. Pure Wool, Silk and Wool, and Silk. Unshrinkable. Also OUTERWEAR and HOMESPUNS. By POST DIRECT. Patterns and prices Post Free.
Dept. 16, Atheenic Mills, Hawick, Scotland.

from underneath, or at the worst through traps in the floor; and such traps weaken his structure. So the real snag is the type of repair which follows some impact. A car is struck broadside. The between-doors pillar is hit, wrenches up the floor, pulls down the roof, for pillar, floor and roof are all welded up solid. The resulting repair obviously cannot be dealt with by any local fettler. Some crude hammering out and repainting will hardly meet the case. The car must go back to the factory, where perhaps some parts will have to be cut out, new pieces welded in, and the whole resprayed. To such criticisms there is no answer, except to reflect that we all hope our driving skill will protect us against such catastrophes, and that if we are unlucky—well, either our own or the other fellow's insurance company will foot the bill, and we must resign ourselves to being carless for a week or so. After all, a broadside impact was no trifle with the older types of car.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 446

Set by F. Laws

With the entry of the American tabloid into English journalism the headline has become more and more important. A First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best poems of not more than sixteen lines written entirely in headlinese. The last verse of Mr. William Plomer's Headline History will serve as a model:

> Alleged Last Trump Blown Yesterday;
> Traffic Drowns Call to Quick and Dead;
> Cup Tie Crowd sees Heavens Ope;
> "Not End of World," says Well-Known Red.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Sept. 30th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 444

Set by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

It was suggested by a reviewer last week that two writers of the last fifty years might have been capable of translating the New Testament: George Moore and D. H. Lawrence. A first prize of Two Guineas and a second of Half a Guinea are offered for a passage of not more than 300 words supposed to occur in either version; reference to book, chapter and verse should be given.

Report by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

To my surprise there were as many Moores as Lawrences. Two competitors forgot to indicate their model; and, strange though it may seem, their styles gave no hint. Obvious points (" ganglions " or " he fell to thinking ") were curiously avoided; so much the better if only the finer shades had been there in compensation. Unfortunately, they were not; only two or three entries showed a real sense of style. Of course, a good choice of text was half the battle, and here L. W. Bailey scored. It was strange that no one pitched upon a Pauline episode for Moore; I should have thought the speech at Athens, or the shipwreck on Melita, would have been rewarding. Liobur Lobhtha, it is true, converted Romans vii. 6–13 into a dialogue between Moore and his Conscience in the manner of that in the *Confessions of a Young Man*; and with considerable ingenuity, as will be seen from a comparison of the original with his version of vv. 7 and 8: "But what is that you are saying? You would subvert and replace the moral imperatives; there I join issue with you, I forbid it. They give life just that risk which is the spice of impropriety. You must have conventions, if it is only for the pleasure of breaking them, just as you must have innocence, if it is only for the pleasure of seducing it. Remove moral principles, and fornication and adultery will become as dull and conscientious as chastity." The Woman Taken in Adultery was of course a safe choice for either author, and Towanbucket's Moore had some good phrases: "Master, we caught this hussy red-handed." "Go, my lass, and behave thyself." So had Ellen's Lawrentian Magnificat to the Life Force. I recommend L. W. Bailey for the first prize (he gets Lawrence's mystical earnestness) and for second G. T., whose Moore, though leaning towards Butcher and Lang, is not a bad parody of the *Brook Kerith*.

FIRST PRIZE

FROM A TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BY D. H. LAWRENCE
(Matt. ch. 19, v. 3–9)

"Would you consider," asked the Pharisees, "that any grounds are adequate for divorce to-day?" He gazed at them in silence for a moment. Oh, the awful unutterable shallowness of their petty questions! "Are you so ignorant," he cried angrily, "that you do not understand *why* mankind is divided into male and female? Can you not sense the rhythm of the sex relationship in which lies the very meaning of Life itself? Do you not know that when a man feels that rhythm within himself, that deep belly-urge towards a woman, he must leave father, mother, friends, and cleave himself only to her; so that their two bodies become one body. And that one body is not transient and temporary but permanent and symbolic; it is a divine mystery which no man should attempt to destroy." "Then why did Moses sanction divorce for incompatibility?" they asked. "Because of the utter hardness of the intellect, the cold barrier of the will which men erected to keep out the warm, rich flow of their sex," he replied. "But when the world began, before the pure innocent joy of physical love could be frustrated by the disintegration of the mind—ah, then things were different. I tell you that when a wife is unfaithful she has broken the bond of unity with Nature she has shared with her husband; she has destroyed their illimitable oneness and he may divorce her. But if he divorce her for any other reason then it is *he* that has destroyed that oneness; it is he that is guilty of adultery."

L. W. BAILEY

SECOND PRIZE

St. Matthew vi. 26–33.
GEORGE MOORE'S VERSION

And Jesus bade them figure to themselves the birds of the air which, neither sowing nor reaping, are yet the care of the Father; and he posed them if that they were not more precious than a scatter of birds; and beholding their muse, he plied them if that any man by the thinking of it could add a cubit to his stature. And they keeping silence he fell to pitying how each was anxious to apparel himself well in the eyes of the world; and his thought became words and he bade them find symbol in the lilies of the field which neither toil nor spin and yet are seen to distain the glittering harness of Solomon. And he held on to pose them further, demanding of them if the Father, who so apparels the ephemeral grass, should not much more apparel them; and he could not forbear to exclaim at the thin modicum of their faith. Then, and with a smile, he counselled them that they be not anxious concerning such things as they should eat and drink, and such things as they should clothe themselves withal; for the Gentiles tease their thought with these queries, being ignorant that the Father knoweth well the need of such things. And seeking to brighten their hearts he besought them that they should seek out the Kingdom of the Father and of his righteousness and thereby make discovery that all things necessary were added to their seeking.

G. T.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 299.—ORCHIDS FOR THE JUDGE

Judge Vanilla, the famous collector of orchids, employed four young men to seek new species for him. Their contracts were for five years. Each received a salary and, in addition, a bonus on the following generous scale. For each approved new species found during the first year, £10. For each new species found during the second year, £20. Similarly for the third, fourth and fifth years, £30, £40 and £50 respectively.

All four young men acquitted themselves creditably, earning a bonus every year. Each, during the five years, was paid in respect of nine new species. Their aggregate bonuses however (the five years being considered as a whole) were in the ratio of 7 : 6 : 5 : 4.

Anthony did best financially. Bertram, the next most successful collector, found the same number of new species in each of the last two years. Christian, who did better financially than David, found the same number of new species in each of the first two years.

How many new species did the Judge pay out on each year?

PROBLEM 297.—THE PIETAS CODE

Competitors who remember Problem 258 (The Taxi) will have had no difficulty in solving this one. The basis of the Pietas Code is PI ETA—the 16th and 7th letters of the Greek alphabet. Transposing the letters by cyclic elimination, taking the 16th and 7th alternately, and ignoring each sixth letter in the final transposition, one gets the message:

A THUNDERSTORM IS THREATENED

PROBLEM 296—THE PYRAMID AND THE RADIX

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: S. Proud, 8 Oakdene Avenue, Stockton-on-Tees.

Seven points are awarded.

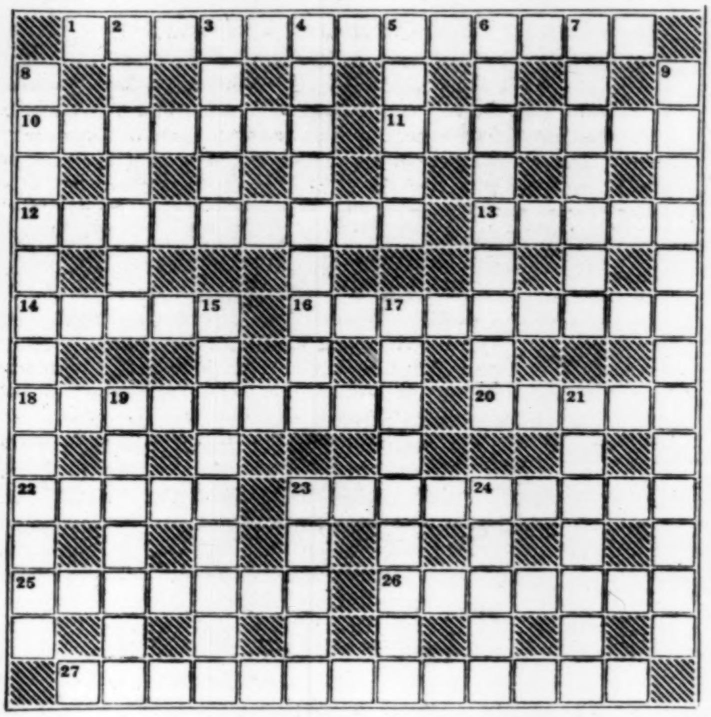
(A most excellent problem. I hope you can persuade Mr. A. C. Young to set us some more.—B. J. B.)

CALIBAN

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 446

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

F. C. Geary, 134 Green Lanes, N.16

ACROSS

1. Question of Soliloquy. (13)
10. They produce suckers. (7)
11. Body line, perhaps. (7)
12. Dinner has upset the tribunal it seems. (9)
13. State of Ancient Law? (5)
14. Causes a run on handkerchiefs. (5)
16. Is this what flighty young things smoke? (9)
18. Lands Ends. (9)
20. One usually gets into a bit of a lather at the prospect of using it. (5)
22. Islam in transition. (5)
23. Get across the Bench? (9)
25. May one ne'er die for it. (7)
26. 21's goal after 10. (7)
27. " —— And in sad cypress let me be laid." (13)

DOWN

2. There's nothing modern in this peerage. (7)
3. How to clean sheets that are marked. (5)
4. It's the limit when authority does this. (9)
5. Language that adjures one to examine the feet. (5)
6. Pauline profession. (9)
7. I'm bored with this. (7)
8. Begins a foolish Shakespearean song. (13)
9. Two sorts of people whose ears were asked for. (13)
15. Reflected sunlight. (9)
17. As a rule this does not mean any time this month. (9)
19. Goes in a different way. (7)
21. He would like to be at home in Palestine. (7)
23. How to put something at a distance. (5)
24. Uncommonly common says the cynic. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

B	▨	B	▨	M	▨	B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y
U	T	O	P	I	A	▨	L	▨	E	▨	E	▨	A	▨
M	▨	O	▨	N	▨	S	T	A	N	D	B	A	C	K
B	U	T	T	E	R	▨	R	▨	N	▨	E	▨	I	▨
L	▨	B	▨	R	I	G	A	▨	I	S	L	A	N	D
E	N	L	I	S	T	▨	V	E	S	T	S	▨	G	▨
B	▨	A	▨	▨	E	▨	I	▨	▨	A	▨	F	▨	O
E	X	C	U	R	S	I	O	N	T	R	A	I	N	S
E	▨	K	▨	I	▨	▨	L	▨	I	▨	▨	R	▨	T
▨	C	▨	A	M	P	L	E	▨	R	E	C	E	D	E
F	O	R	F	A	R	▨	T	I	E	R	▨	P	▨	O
▨	U	▨	F	▨	O	▨	R	▨	D	E	W	L	A	P
G	R	E	E	N	P	E	A	S	▨	N	▨	A	▨	A
▨	S	▨	C	▨	E	▨	Y	▨	T	O	M	C	A	T
B	E	S	T	D	R	E	S	S	▨	W	▨	E	▨	H

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A FITTING
B FITTING
C FITTING
D FITTING
E FITTING
EE FITTING
SHOWING A SIZE 9 SHOE

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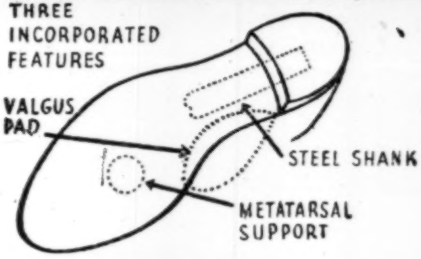

Sufferers from any of the common foot ailments such as weak arches, hammer toes, thick ankles, callouses, etc., can rid themselves of the trouble completely by wearing Dr. Fairweather's "Progressive" Shoes. These shoes are designed in the common-sense knowledge that the majority of foot troubles are caused by faulty footwear which does not permit the natural freedom and exercise which is essential to foot health.

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DR. FAIRWEATHER'S SHOES FOR WOMEN. *Smart styles and colours, all widths. Priced from 36/-.*

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

THE SURRENDER—CZECHOSLOVAK BONDS—GESTETNER

It appears that in the Stock Exchange view peace is better than honour. The realisation that Mr. Chamberlain intended to keep this country out of war at all costs caused the " bears " to rush to cover, so that an all-round improvement in security prices followed. But little or no business resulted on the rise. Although the City as a whole supports Mr. Chamberlain's policy of scuttle, it must not be assumed that anybody welcomes the prospect of temporary peace with dishonour. As far as I have been able to check up City opinion, I find that even reactionary and Die-hard Conservatives feel humiliated by the abject submission of a British Prime Minister to the German Dictator. In the opinion of many brokers, if the British Government intended to dishonour its international obligations it would have been more logical to retire into Lord Beaverbrook's splendid isolation a year ago. A few, who see the ruin of Stock Exchange business if Herr Hitler maintains this tension for another twelve months, are even regretting that the " show-down " has been postponed. However, if there is to be peace with dishonour it is generally assumed that there will be no disarmament. Indeed, the improvement in the iron and steel market on Wednesday suggested that a settlement with Hitler would be so little regarded that there might be a boom in armament shares. For convenience I give a selection of representative share prices before and after Mr. Chamberlain's first visit to Herr Hitler.

	Sept. 13th.	Sept. 21st.	Yield %.
Anglo Iranian £1	$4\frac{9}{16}$	5	£5 0 0
Distillers £1	90/-	94/6	£4 15 3
Shell Transport £1	$4\frac{1}{32}$	$4\frac{9}{32}$	£6 8 9
Turner and Newall £1 ..	71/3	76/-	*£5 8 9
Unilever £1	31/10½	35/-	*£5 19 6

*Allowing for a reduced rate of tax

It would have been impossible to buy these shares in any large quantity on the fall. For example, I found one jobber making a price in Shell Transport in only 200 shares. Jobbing, in the old sense of the word, is conspicuous by its absence in most markets. Only in American stocks has any volume of business passed. Wall Street came in strong on the news that the Czech Government had conditionally accepted the Anglo-French peace plan. The sarcasm which the American press is indulging in at the expense of British honour appears to leave the operators on Wall Street cold.

* * *

By Wednesday's close Czechoslovak 8 per cent. Sterling Bonds had fallen in London to 52, as compared with a 1937 " high " of 108. In 1922 there was a £5,350,000 issue of these sterling obligations, £4,650,000 being placed in London and the balance in Amsterdam. Simultaneously a $23,250,000 issue of 8 per cent. Sinking Fund Gold Bonds was made in New York. There are now about £4,000,000 of the sterling, and $17,000,000 of the dollar issue outstanding. The redemption date is 1951–52. The security behind the loans is the receipts of the Czechoslovak Customs and tobacco monopoly. If Czechoslovakia is dismembered by partition between Germany, Hungary and Poland, the bonds will obviously be of no value, and the British and American investors will whistle in vain for their money. They will not get it either from the Nazi lion or the jackals in attendance at the squalid feast. Moreover, even if Czechoslovakia is shorn only of the Sudetenland, Teschen and the Magyar districts of Slovakia, the security behind the Czech bonds will be gravely impaired. Political considerations apart, the truncated Czech State envisaged in the Anglo-French self-determination plan would be economically in a position nearly as parlous as that of the Austria created by the Treaty of Trianon. With the Sudetenland would go most of Czechoslovakia's coal and the greater part of her chemical, glass and pottery industries. Investors who congratulated themselves on the high credit status of Czechoslovakia were counting without Hitler—and Chamberlain.

* * *

Against the background of the overwhelming growth of Germany's political and economic hegemony over south-eastern Europe, the efforts of the Industrial Facilities Corporation, Ltd., to promote British participation in Danubian trade have the appearance of a gallant, but forlorn venture. The Corporation was responsible for negotiating—through the medium of the Export Credit Guarantee machinery—the recent Russian, Polish Westinghouse and Turkish credits. It is now reported to be investigating the possibilities of a plan whereby Roumania would be granted a medium-term British credit of the order of £2,000,000 which would be utilised in the purchase of machinery in this country and would be liquidated by the gradual disposal in the London market of 400,000 tons of Roumanian wheat. The plan is admirable, but its extension on wider lines obviously presupposes conditions of political security in the Balkans. Moreover, British credit would have to be heavily pledged in order to have much effect in countering the influence of a Greater Reich which absorbs over 40 per cent. of south-eastern Europe's exports.

* * *

If normal business is ever to be resumed on the Stock Exchange a number of shares will not long remain on their present " crisis " yields. Take, for example, D. Gestetner 5*s.* shares at 25*s.* to yield 8 per cent. on dividends recently declared of 40 per cent. As everyone knows, this company manufactures duplicating and office printing machines and has built up over a long period a world-wide marketing organisation. The management is first class and everything about the business is up to date and efficient. The export trade has its ups and downs, but a stabilising factor in the company's earnings is the servicing of Gestetner users. It is estimated that the replacement demand accounts for about 50 per cent. of the company's total sales. This may explain the surprising maintenance of profits in the trading year ended on August 31st last. These profits were distributed up to the hilt, so that the market may feel that the 40 per cent. dividends will not be maintained in the current year. But even if the distribution is cut to 35 per cent. or 30 per cent. the yields would still be the not unattractive ones of 7 per cent. or 6 per cent. It must not be forgotten that capital bonuses were distributed in the years 1934–37 and that the balance sheet is exceptionally strong, with cash and Government Securities at £510,000 and goodwill entirely written off. In 1937 the shares (cum capital bonus) stood at 50*s.* 9*d.* and have not been so low as the present price since 1934. Something must be allowed for the narrowness of market, but the current yield of 8 per cent. suggests that the Gestetner equity is being too conservatively valued. To find similar yields the investor would have to go to the iron and steel market, but that is another story.

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